CollegeBoard AP

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

Course Description

Effective Fall 2014

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Effective Fall 2014

The College Board
New York, NY

About the College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators, and schools.

For further information, visit **www.collegeboard.org**.

AP® Equity and Access Policy

The College Board strongly encourages educators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP® programs by giving all willing and academically prepared students the opportunity to participate in AP. We encourage the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP for students from ethnic, racial and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underserved. Schools should make every effort to ensure their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population. The College Board also believes that all students should have access to academically challenging course work before they enroll in AP classes, which can prepare them for AP success. It is only through a commitment to equitable preparation and access that true equity and excellence can be achieved.

AP Course Descriptions

AP course descriptions are updated regularly. Please visit AP Central™ (**apcentral.collegeboard.org**) to determine whether a more recent course description PDF is available.

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About AP®

AP enables students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Through more than 30 courses, each culminating in a rigorous exam, AP provides willing and academically prepared students with the opportunity to earn college credit and/or advanced placement. Taking AP courses also demonstrates to college admission officers that students have sought out the most rigorous course work available to them.

Each AP course is modeled upon a comparable college course, and college and university faculty play a vital role in ensuring that AP courses align with college-level standards. Talented and dedicated AP teachers help AP students in classrooms around the world develop and apply the content knowledge and skills they will need later in college.

Each AP course concludes with a college-level assessment developed and scored by college and university faculty and experienced AP teachers. AP Exams are an essential part of the AP experience, enabling students to demonstrate their mastery of college-level course work. Most four-year colleges and universities in the United States and universities in more than 60 countries recognize AP in the admission process and grant students credit, placement, or both on the basis of successful AP Exam scores. Visit **www.collegeboard.org/apcreditpolicy** to view AP credit and placement policies at more than 1,000 colleges and universities.

Performing well on an AP Exam means more than just the successful completion of a course; it is a gateway to success in college. Research consistently shows that students who receive a score of 3 or higher on AP Exams typically experience greater academic success in college and have higher graduation rates than their non-AP peers.[1] Additional AP studies are available at **www.collegeboard.org/research**.

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1 See the following research studies for more details:

Linda Hargrove, Donn Godin, and Barbara Dodd, *College Outcomes Comparisons by AP and Non-AP High School Experiences*. New York: The College Board, 2008.

Chrys Dougherty, Lynn Mellor, and Shuling Jian, *The Relationship Between Advanced Placement and College Graduation*. Austin, Texas: National Center for Educational Accountability, 2006.

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Offering AP Courses and Enrolling Students

This *AP Course Description* details the essential information required to understand the objectives and expectations of an AP course. The AP Program unequivocally supports the principle that each school implements its own curriculum that will enable students to develop the content knowledge and skills described here.

Schools wishing to offer AP courses must participate in the AP Course Audit, a process through which AP teachers' syllabi are reviewed by college faculty. The AP Course Audit was created at the request of College Board members who sought a means for the College Board to provide teachers and administrators with clear guidelines on curricular and resource requirements for AP courses and to help colleges and universities validate courses marked "AP" on students' transcripts. This process ensures that AP teachers' syllabi meet or exceed the curricular and resource expectations that college and secondary school faculty have established for college-level courses. For more information on the AP Course Audit, visit **www.collegeboard.org/apcourseaudit**.

How AP Courses and Exams Are Developed

Committees of college faculty and expert AP teachers design AP courses and exams to ensure that each AP subject reflects and assesses college-level expectations. AP Development Committees define the scope and expectations of the course, articulating what students should know and be able to do upon completion of the AP course.

The AP Development Committees are also responsible for drawing clear and well-articulated connections between the AP course and AP Exam. The AP Exam development process is a multiyear endeavor; all AP Exams undergo extensive review, revision, piloting, and analysis to ensure that the questions are fair, of high quality, and reflect an appropriate range of difficulty.

How AP Exams Are Scored

The exam scoring process, like the course and exam development process, relies on the expertise of both AP teachers and college faculty. While multiple-choice questions are scored by machine, the free-response questions are scored by thousands of college faculty and expert AP teachers at the annual AP Reading. AP Exam Readers are thoroughly trained, and their work is monitored throughout the Reading for fairness and consistency. In each subject, a highly respected college faculty member serves as Chief Reader, who, with the help of Readers in leadership positions, maintains the accuracy of the scoring standards. Scores on the free-response questions are weighted and combined with the results of the computer-scored multiple-choice questions, and this raw score is converted into a composite AP score of 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1.

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The score-setting process is both precise and labor intensive, involving numerous psychometric analyses of the results of a specific AP Exam in a specific year and of the particular group of students who took that exam. Additionally, to ensure alignment with college-level standards, part of the score-setting process involves comparing the performance of AP students with the performance of students enrolled in comparable courses in colleges throughout the United States. In general, the AP composite score points are set so that the lowest raw score needed to earn an AP score of 5 is equivalent to the average score among college students earning grades of A in the college course. Similarly, AP Exam scores of 4 are equivalent to college grades of A-, B+, and B. AP Exam scores of 3 are equivalent to college grades of B-, C+, and C.

Using and Interpreting AP Scores

College faculty are involved in every aspect of AP, from course and exam development to scoring and standards alignment. These faculty members ensure that the courses and exams meet colleges' expectations for content taught in comparable college courses. Based upon outcomes research and program evaluation, the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Advanced Placement Program recommend that colleges grant credit and/or placement to students with AP Exam scores of 3 and higher. The AP score of 3 is equivalent to grades of B-, C+, and C in the equivalent college course. However, colleges and universities set their own AP credit, advanced standing, and course placement policies based on their unique needs and objectives.

AP Score	Recommendation
5	Extremely well qualified
4	Well qualified
3	Qualified
2	Possibly qualified
1	No recommendation

Additional Resources

Visit **apcentral.collegeboard.org** for more information about the AP Program.

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AP English Program

The AP Program offers two courses in English studies, each designed to provide high school students the opportunity to engage in a typical introductory-level college English curriculum. The AP English Language and Composition course focuses on rhetorical analysis of nonfiction texts and the development and revision of well-reasoned, evidence-centered analytic and argumentative writing. The AP English Literature and Composition course focuses on reading, analyzing, and writing about imaginative literature (fiction, poetry, drama) from various periods.

In English, the tasks of describing the representative introductory course or courses and assessing students' achievements in comparable high school courses are complex, for curricula and instruction vary widely across the discipline in U.S. colleges and universities. While the AP English Development Committees value and want to maintain such diversity, they also recognize the need to emphasize the common skills in reading and writing that will benefit students' broader studies as well as prepare them for successful engagement in sequent English courses. The greatest challenge to the committees, then, is finding an appropriate balance between describing and prescribing curriculum format and content and instructional approaches.

Many American colleges begin with a course in expository writing for a year, a semester, or a shorter period, followed by a course in introductory readings in literature. Subsequently, students may take advanced courses in language, rhetoric and expository writing, or literature. Students who elect courses in rhetoric and composition typically focus their reading on discursive prose that ranges across disciplines. Those who elect advanced courses in literature generally study major authors, periods, genres, or themes; their reading typically concentrates on imaginative literature (poetry, fiction, and drama and "creative nonfiction").

There is no prescribed sequence of study for the two AP English courses, and a high school may offer one or both courses. In helping students choose an AP English course, teachers will want to consider the following factors:

- the English programs offered by the colleges that their AP students are interested in attending
- the AP policies of these colleges, particularly the policies of their English programs
- students' own abilities and interests:
  - Students choosing AP English Language and Composition should be interested in studying and writing various kinds of analytic or persuasive essays.
  - Students choosing AP English Literature and Composition should be interested in studying literature of various periods and genres and using this wide reading knowledge in discussions of literary topics.

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Introduction to AP English Language and Composition

This publication is intended to give AP English Language and Composition teachers a detailed summary of the curricular requirements for the course, as well as a summary of the performance expectations for students in the course. Additionally, this document provides a detailed explanation of the skills addressed by the AP English Language and Composition Exam. It also provides guidance about strategies for effective instruction and formative assessment, both crucial elements in engaging high school learners in a college-level curriculum.

An AP English Language and Composition course requires students to become skilled readers of prose written in a variety of rhetorical contexts and skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Both their reading and their writing should make students aware of interactions among a writer's purposes, reader expectations, and an author's propositional content, as well as the genre conventions and the resources of language that contribute to effectiveness in writing.

At the heart of an AP English Language and Composition course is the reading of various texts. Reading facilitates informed citizenship and thus increases students' capacity to enter into consequential conversations with others about meaningful issues. Also contributing to students' informed citizenship is their ability to gather source materials representing particular conversations and then make their own reasonable and informed contributions to those conversations. Students' ability to engage with outside sources in their reading, writing, and research is an important measure of their intellectual growth.

While writing represents a significant component of this course, the core skill required is the ability to read well. In reading another writer's work, students must be able to address four fundamental questions about composition:

- What is being said?
- To whom is it being said?
- How is it being said?
- Why is it being said?

The answers to these questions inform students' own composition processes as they learn to read like writers and write like readers.

Prerequisites

While there are no prerequisites for an AP English Language and Composition course, students who have had experience in rhetorical analysis, argument, and synthesis may more easily address the objectives of the course. Such skills may be introduced as early as the middle school level.

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Reading Level of Course Texts and Volume of Reading

The College Board does not prescribe specific texts for an AP English Language and Composition course. That said, several guidelines are useful in determining the appropriateness of texts used in this course. These guidelines include the following:

- texts that represent a clear rhetorical situation (e.g., topical nonfiction)
- texts that speak to one another through a variety of genres
- texts that could be read in an introductory composition class in college
- texts that require teacher direction for students to discern meaning
- texts that rate as upper high school level on a Lexile chart[2]

Neither does the College Board prescribe an amount of reading for an AP English Language and Composition course. Several questions, however, are useful in assessing the volume of reading students should be assigned in this course:

- Are students reading challenging texts every day?
- Do students employ rereading as an interpretive strategy?
- Do students gain sufficient practice to develop skills in reading purposefully and rhetorically?
- Do students write on a regular basis about what others have written?
- Do the selected readings provoke responses from multiple perspectives and thus generate public discussion?
- Are students given the opportunity to immerse themselves in substantive texts — ones that require several days or weeks to read — as well as texts that can be read and reread within a single class period?
- Are students spending at least 8 hours per week (both inside and outside of class) engaged in their reading and writing? Is there a clear connection between their reading and writing?
- Are students reading texts that require teacher involvement or scaffolding, or can the texts be read independently?

Expectations for Writing Ability

Students entering an AP English Language and Composition course should possess fundamental skills in inquiry (research), analysis, and informed argument. Experiences with nonfiction are integral in understanding that writing has a purposeful, interactive value and transcends the skills that are assessed on the AP English Language and Composition Exam. Composing responses to exam prompts is not the primary writing skill students are expected to develop in the course. Instead, they should gain considerable practice in reading a wide variety of nonfiction texts — from newspaper editorials to critical essays and political treatises — in order to find out what others are thinking, saying, and doing in the world. Familiarity with these conversations will help students become informed and rhetorically competent writers who not only consider the views of others but use writing as a way to formulate and convey their own responses.

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2 For more information on Lexile scores for upper high school, visit **www.lexile.com**.

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AP English Language and Composition Course Overview

An AP English Language and Composition course cultivates the reading and writing skills that students need for college success and for intellectually responsible civic engagement. The course guides students in becoming curious, critical, and responsive readers of diverse texts, and becoming flexible, reflective writers of texts addressed to diverse audiences for diverse purposes. The reading and writing students do in the course should deepen and expand their understanding of how written language functions *rhetorically*: to communicate writers' intentions and elicit readers' responses in particular situations. The course cultivates the rhetorical understanding and use of written language by directing students' attention to writer/reader interactions in their reading and writing of various formal and informal genres (e.g., memos, letters, advertisements, political satires, personal narratives, scientific arguments, cultural critiques, research reports).

Reading and writing activities in the course also deepen students' knowledge and control of formal conventions of written language (e.g., vocabulary, diction, syntax, spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, genre). The course helps students understand that formal conventions of the English language in its many written and spoken dialects are historically, culturally, and socially produced; that the use of these conventions may intentionally or unintentionally contribute to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of a piece of writing in a particular rhetorical context; and that a particular set of language conventions defines Standard Written English, the preferred dialect for academic discourse.

Course Goals

The goals of an AP English Language and Composition course are diverse because the rhetoric and composition course in college serves a variety of functions in the undergraduate curriculum. The following, however, are the primary goals of the course:

- **Developing critical literacy:** In most colleges and universities, the course is intended to strengthen the basic academic skills students need to perform confidently and effectively in courses across the curriculum. The course introduces students to the literacy expectations of higher education by cultivating essential academic skills such as critical inquiry, deliberation, argument, reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Few colleges and universities regard completion of this entry-level course as the endpoint of students' English language education; subsequent courses in general and specialized curricula should continue building and refining the skills students practice in their rhetoric and composition courses.
- **Facilitating informed citizenship:** While most college rhetoric and composition courses perform the academic service of preparing students to meet the literacy challenges of college-level study, they also serve the larger goal of cultivating the critical literacy skills students need for lifelong learning. Beyond their academic lives, students should be able to use the literacy skills practiced in the course for personal satisfaction and responsible engagement in civic life.

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To support these goals, rhetoric and composition courses emphasize the reading and writing of analytic and argumentative texts instead of, or in combination with, texts representing English-language literary traditions. Like the college rhetoric and composition course, the AP English Language and Composition course focuses students' attention on the functions of written language in and out of the academy, asking students to practice the reading as well as the writing of texts designed to inquire, to explain, to criticize, and to persuade in a variety of rhetorical situations. In this approach to the study and practice of written language, a writer's style is important because of its rhetorical, rather than its aesthetic, function.

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AP Course Audit and Curricular Requirements

Schools that intend to offer AP courses and label them as such on high school transcripts must provide evidence that the teachers of those courses are (a) aware of the curricular requirements as stipulated by the College Board and (b) have a plan to address those requirements. Schools provide such evidence by submitting a syllabus or course description for each proposed AP course. Those syllabi are then reviewed by college professors who teach the equivalent introductory-level college courses. Courses for which sufficient evidence is provided are then authorized by the College Board and are added to a list of such authorized courses; that list is made available to colleges and universities so that they can verify AP courses that may be listed on student applicants' high school transcripts.

The curricular requirements for the AP English Language and Composition course are as follows:

- The school ensures that each student has a copy of all required readings for individual use inside and outside the classroom.
- The teacher has read the most recent *AP English Language and Composition Course Description.*
- The course teaches and requires students to write in several forms (e.g., narrative, expository, analytical, and argumentative essays) about a variety of subjects (e.g., public policies, popular culture, personal experiences).
- The course requires students to write essays that proceed through several stages or drafts, with revision aided by teacher and peers.
- The course requires students to write in informal contexts (e.g., imitation exercises, journal keeping, collaborative writing, in-class responses) designed to help them become increasingly aware of themselves as writers and of the techniques employed by the writers they read.
- The course requires expository, analytical, and argumentative writing assignments based on readings representing a wide variety of prose styles and genres.
- The course requires nonfiction readings (e.g., essays, journalism, political writing, science writing, nature writing, autobiographies/biographies, diaries, history, criticism) that give students opportunities to identify and explain an author's use of rhetorical strategies and techniques. If fiction and poetry are also assigned, their main purpose should be to help students understand how various effects are achieved by writers' rhetorical choices. (Note: The College Board does not mandate any particular authors or reading list.)
- The course teaches students to analyze how graphics and visual images both relate to written texts and serve as alternative forms of text themselves.
- The course teaches research skills and, in particular, the ability to evaluate, use, and cite primary and secondary sources. The course assigns projects such as the researched argument paper, which asks students to present an argument of their own that includes the analysis and synthesis of ideas from an array of sources.

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- The course teaches students how to cite sources using a recognized editorial style guide (e.g., *MLA Style Manual*, *The Chicago Manual of Style*).
- The AP teacher provides instruction and feedback on students' writing assignments, both before and after students revise their work, to help students develop the following skills:
  - Control of a wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately and effectively
  - Mastery of a variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordination and coordination
  - Logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques to increase coherence, such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis
  - A balance of generalization and specific, illustrative detail
  - Effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, establishing and maintaining voice, and achieving appropriate emphasis through diction and sentence structure

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Course Curriculum

Because the AP English Language and Composition course depends on the development of interpretive skills as students learn to read and write with increasing complexity and sophistication, it is intended to be a full-year course. Reading and writing tasks over the school year should be sequenced so that students can experience a progression of skill development. Therefore, the challenge for teachers in designing this course is to clearly articulate for students how they are developing a skill set that grows over the duration of the course.

General Learning Objectives

Upon completing the AP English Language and Composition course, students should be able to:

- **Analyze and interpret samples of purposeful writing, identifying and explaining an author's use of rhetorical strategies.** This process includes students' understanding of *what* an author is saying, *how* an author is saying it, and *why* an author is saying it. Additionally, this process looks at how an author's rhetorical choices develop meaning or achieve a particular purpose or effect with a given audience.
- **Analyze images and other multimodal texts for rhetorical features.** This goal acknowledges the multiple modes of learning that help students acquire literacy, with attention to the power of visual literacy in understanding an author's purpose.
- **Use effective rhetorical strategies and techniques when composing.** Students apply their analytical skills to their own writing so that they are reading like writers and writing like readers.
- **Write for a variety of purposes.** Students' writing experiences in the course must exceed the timed writings that are assessed on the AP English Language and Composition Exam. For instance, students might undertake a lengthy and intensive inquiry into a problem or controversy, consulting and evaluating arguments and viewpoints presented in a variety of sources, and using those sources to provoke, complicate, and/or support their own responses to the problem or controversy. Students' writing in the course should also go through a process that includes feedback from other readers, revision, and proofreading. Finally, forms other than the essays featured in the exam have a place in the course, such as personal narrative, letters, advertisements, reviews, etc.
- **Respond to different writing tasks according to their unique rhetorical and composition demands, and translate that rhetorical assessment into a plan for writing.** Different contexts require different choices in creating and delivering texts. This goal addresses the importance of prewriting and planning in the writing process.
- **Create and sustain original arguments based on information synthesized from readings, research, and/or personal observation and experience.** Students learn to see argument as addressing a wide range of purposes in a variety of formats. They should be able to recognize general features of arguments, such as claims,

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evidence, qualifiers, warrants, and conclusions. Students' ability to create informed arguments depends largely upon their reading of primary and secondary sources. The more that students discern argument as entering into a conversation with others, the more credible and cogent their own arguments become.

- **Evaluate and incorporate sources into researched arguments.** When entering into a conversation with others, students must comprehend and evaluate (not just summarize or quote) others' positions. Such a process involves purposeful reading, a wide range of reading, and the ability to credibly support an evaluation of a writer's position.
- **Demonstrate understanding of the conventions of citing primary and secondary sources.** Students must learn to use the conventions recommended by professional organizations such as the Modern Language Association (MLA), the University of Chicago Press (*The Chicago Manual of Style*), or the American Psychological Association (APA). Students need to understand that for academic writing, the selection of documentation style depends upon the discipline the writing is intended for; students therefore need to learn how to find and follow style guides in various disciplines.
- **Gain control over various reading and writing processes, with careful attention to inquiry (research), rhetorical analysis and synthesis of sources, drafting, revising/rereading, editing, and review.** This goal emphasizes the importance of the entire process of writing, including teacher intervention in providing useful feedback, along with peer review and publication.
- **Converse and write reflectively about personal processes of composition.** Metacognition, or reflection, is a key component of this course; the practice of describing their own processes helps students internalize standards — articulated by local, state, or national rubrics — of effective composition.
- **Demonstrate understanding and control of Standard Written English as well as stylistic maturity in their own writing.** This process clearly relates to the goals of reading rhetorically — the better that students understand how other writers create a particular effect or produce meaning, the more fully their own prose accomplishes such goals.
- **Revise a work to make it suitable for a different audience.** In addition to revision, this goal acknowledges the importance of recognizing a variety of audiences for a piece of writing.

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Instruction

Ways to Organize Instruction

Instruction in an AP English Language and Composition course may be organized in a variety of ways. For instance, it might be organized as a succession of smaller conceptual units, using several connected yet diverse works to explore different perspectives on a single theme, such as education, government, gender and culture, and ethics. A section of the course focusing on the individual, for example, might use works by writers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Emile Durkheim, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ruth Benedict, and Erich Fromm to examine the connection between the individual and society as well as to recognize the rhetorical strategies used by each writer. This option also allows teachers to bring in current events and contemporary readings to make connections with writers' perspectives from earlier time periods.

Another possibility is to organize instruction around the different modes of discourse (descriptive-narrative, expository, argumentative), developing a variety of writing opportunities whereby students first examine and identify writers' rhetorical choices in several examples of a particular mode of writing, and then practice those strategies in crafting original personal narratives, expository writing, and argumentative essays. Students learning to write an argument of definition might read Susan Sontag's "Beauty" or Lynn Peril's "Pink Think" to examine the structure and protocols of writing definitional arguments. They could then compose an original piece that might require research and synthesis of information from source materials, or that could be based solely on the student's personal experiences and observations.

The study of language itself — differences between oral and written discourse, formal and informal language, historical changes in speech and writing — is often a productive organizing strategy for teachers and can serve as the single focus of an entire semester of work. Still another alternative is to use genre as an organizing principle for instruction; for example, one could study the evolution of the essay as its own genre or examine the more contemporary use of graphic and visual texts as argument. The use of genre as an organizing principle offers students the opportunity to explore ways that form dictates function or vice versa.

Key Principles for Course Organization

Students should leave the AP English Language and Composition course with an advanced understanding of what it means to engage in an ongoing, public conversation through reading and writing. By emphasizing key *practices* (rhetorical analysis, synthesis, and argument) for advanced literacy and intellectual engagement, the course builds students' resources for comprehending, interpreting, and producing public texts and connecting with readers in and out of academic communities. Since the goals for an advanced writing course must be broad enough to encompass the outcomes listed later in this document, teachers should frame their own AP English Language and Composition courses with the following principles:

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- **Build complex reading and writing practices rather than discrete skills.** When designing their own AP English Language and Composition courses, teachers will benefit from framing the outcomes of the course in terms of practices that students will continue to develop over time, rather than as particular types of knowledge. The concept of practices highlights reading and writing as complex, situated activities that require students to negotiate multiple goals, intersecting skill sets, and processes. Students should develop reading and writing strategies that enable them to anticipate audience expectations and imagine shifting contextual constraints. These flexible ways of understanding reading and writing processes might — and probably should — disrupt previously learned structures that students have internalized as templates or rules; examples include the five-paragraph essay, which limits the writer to deductive logic, or the avoidance of first-person pronouns, which restricts the writer to a detached perspective. By the end of the course, students should be able to assess the situated nature of a reading or of a writing task, rather than apply a set of formulaic responses.
- **Create learning opportunities that reinforce desired reading and writing practices.** Because the desired outcomes of the course are reading and writing practices, the AP English Language and Composition teacher should design lessons that address and support those practices. The course should provide learning experiences that encourage students to develop flexible and strategic ways to read and write a wide array of texts. For example, teachers can expose students to a range of texts that demonstrate how different contexts, audiences, and purposes produce different textual forms. Teachers might also design writing tasks that challenge students to accommodate competing expectations from multiple audiences.

  A helpful resource is "Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing."[3] The document, developed by the Council for Writing Program Administrators (CWPA), the National Council for Teachers in English (NCTE), and the National Writing Project (NWP), highlights the importance of cultivating in students particular lifelong *habits of mind* necessary for success in learning. According to the "Framework for Success," these habits include curiosity, openness, engagement, creativity, persistence, responsibility, flexibility, and metacognition. The document explains how teachers can design experiences in reading, writing, and analysis to support these lifelong habits of mind.
- **Facilitate understanding of rhetorical reading and writing.** The aim of this course is to help students develop the ability to read critically and evaluate sources so that they can write from and in response to those sources. Students should learn to interrogate a text, not only to discern *what* it is saying but also to understand *how* and *why* it proposes what it does. The following core tasks within the curriculum should help students develop critical reading and writing skills, moving them beyond merely summarizing a text and toward analyzing how and why a text has a particular effect on a reader:
  - Rhetorical Analysis, which requires students to attend to the pragmatic and stylistic choices writers make to achieve their purposes with particular

3 **http://wpacouncil.org/files/framework-for-success-postsecondary-writing.pdf**.

audiences, or the effects these choices might have on multiple, even unintended, audiences.

- Argument, which requires students to articulate clear claims and to provide appropriate evidence and convincing justification, with the goal of convincing a reader to agree or to take a course of action.
- Synthesis, which requires students to read for multiple perspectives in response to a common question and to discern patterns of agreement and disagreement among these sources. Reading synthetically attunes students to ongoing conversations and is an essential step in the composition of their own original, informed, authoritative, and convincing responses to the question. Synthesis tasks require students to read for intertextual connections among sources and frame the activity of research as focused inquiry.

In AP English Language and Composition courses, as in most college composition courses, most classroom instruction is focused on reading and composing script or print texts to develop students' skills as readers and writers. But the familiar appearance of other media in contemporary composition courses (e.g., speeches, songs, documentary films, television ad campaigns) and on the AP English Language and Composition Exam (e.g., pictures, graphs, charts) acknowledges the much broader reach of rhetoric into nonverbal media. Because many high school and college students perform more rhetorical action in aural and visual media than in writing, college and AP English Language and Composition teachers must help students recognize ways in which written texts can and do perform social action, just as those other (perhaps more familiar) media texts.

Instructional Strategies

AP English Language and Composition focuses on essential reading, writing, and thinking skills that prepare students to analyze print and visual texts in any context and to write in a variety of modes, using a variety of methods. As such, the primary role of the AP English Language and Composition instructor is to facilitate learning through strategic instruction, a model that emphasizes a risk-free environment where student talk, rather than teacher talk, remains central. Teachers assist students in learning how to test their own ideas as well as consider the ideas of others during the reading and writing processes. Students also learn to initiate their own inquiries rather than simply respond to teacher-directed questions. Of course, such an environment carries the expectation that respect for others is taught and valued.

In such an environment, AP English Language and Composition teachers are able to use a variety of learner-centered discussion methods such as the following:

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Strategy	Purpose	Definition
Socratic Seminar	To ask clarifying questions that help students arrive at a new understanding; challenge assumptions; probe perspective and point of view; question facts, reasons, and evidence; or examine implications and outcomes.	Students ask questions of one another in a discussion focused on a topic, essential question, or selected text. The questions initiate a conversation that continues with a series of responses and additional questions.
Debate	To facilitate student collection and oral presentation of evidence supporting the affirmative and negative arguments of a proposition or issue.	Students present an informal or formal argument that defends a claim with reasons, while others defend different claims about the same topic or issue. The goal is to debate ideas without attacking the people who defend those ideas.
Jigsaw	To facilitate student summarization and presentation of information to others in a way that promotes understanding of an issue or text (or multiple texts) without having each student read the text in its entirety; by teaching others, students become experts.	Each student in a group reads a different text or different passage from a single text, taking on the role of "expert" on what was read. Students share the information from that reading with students from other groups, then return to their original groups to share their new knowledge.
Fishbowl	To engage students in a formal discussion that allows them to experience the roles of both participant and active listener; students also have the responsibility of supporting their opinions and responses using specific evidence.	A group of students forms an inner circle and models appropriate discussion techniques while an outer circle of students listens, responds, and evaluates.
Shared Inquiry	To lead students in a deep discussion of a text and encourage a diversity of ideas to emerge as students think deeply and share interpretations.	Students read a provocative text and are asked interpretive questions (for which there are no predetermined "right" answers). Students offer different responses and debate one another, supporting their positions with specific evidence from the text.
Discussion Group	To help students gain a new understanding of or insight into a text or issue by listening to multiple perspectives.	Students engage in an interactive, small-group discussion, often with an assigned role (e.g., questioner, summarizer, facilitator, evidence keeper) to consider a topic, text, question, etc.
Debriefing	To affirm and deepen student understanding.	Students participate in a teacher-facilitated discussion that leads to consensus understanding or helps students identify key conclusions.

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Reading

The AP English Language and Composition curriculum focuses on effective reading and writing practices, emphasizing depth of knowledge over breadth. This is not a content-driven course, so the curriculum need not cover every work on a long reading list; rather, students should come away from the course with intensive practice of literacy skills that they can apply to further reading. Furthermore, although the course should provide students some practice in sustained reading of complex arguments, the inclusion of many lengthy texts throughout the course may be antithetical to achieving the goals of the course, as students may focus on the content of a text while overlooking its rhetorical structure or techniques. A focus on flexibility in applying language skills in multiple contexts to accomplish multiple purposes, along with an emphasis on depth of rhetorical understanding, permits the inclusion of multiple shorter works that students can read and respond to in a narrow timeframe.

Use of Rhetorical Terminology

Growth in skills cannot be measured or assessed as students' mastery of a vocabulary of rhetorical terms. While older versions of this course (including questions on the AP English Language and Composition Exam itself) relied on knowledge of terminology as a way of assessing student work, the AP English Language and Composition Exam has evolved to emphasize the appropriate application of such terminology in students' analyses of texts. Any rhetorical terms that appear in this course are best situated as part of the teacher's vernacular, not the students'. A rule of thumb for students' vocabulary may be to reinforce language often heard in public discourse, or what we may call terms for *functional rhetoric*. These terms may include, but are not limited to *context*, *appeals*, *purpose*, *audience*, *attitude*, *diction*, and *syntax*.

Rhetorical Reading

The AP English Language and Composition course features a wide variety of texts as reading material in order to help students become flexible readers who understand that not all reading is the same. Students in the course should develop as critical readers who ask questions about the rhetorical situation mediated by a text. In short, rhetorical reading encompasses both comprehension and interpretation, and the course draws students' attention to both processes. As readers, students should gain awareness and control of multiple strategies for comprehending the message contained in a text, the purpose or intent behind the message, and the effect of the message on audiences.

Skill in rhetorical reading is a fundamental requirement of both academic and civic life; ideally, it equips students to conduct academically sound inquiry and argumentation and prepares citizens to participate in intellectually responsible, democratic decision-making. It is a reading skill that recognizes language of all kinds as media for social action. Rhetorical reading pays attention to what language *does* as well as what it *says*.

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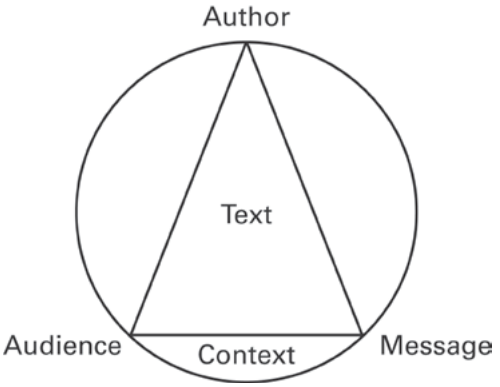
Rhetorical reading assumes that both written and spoken language perform social actions. When we read written texts rhetorically, we are always asking, "What are these words on the page *doing*?" along with, "What do these words *say*?" Rhetorical reading compels us to look beyond the words on the page to the "writing acts" they perform. Reading texts rhetorically means trying to understand the social interactions texts can or do perform between writers and their audiences.

Reading instruction in the course should increase students' appreciation of *audience* as a complex and varied concept. Students should learn to distinguish between primary or intended audiences targeted by a writer and unintended audiences that are differently situated (e.g., culturally, socially, historically, geographically). As readers, students should develop the capacity to anticipate and consider interpretive responses different from their own.

The Rhetorical Triangle

A visual depiction of rhetorical action that teachers and students may find helpful comes from James Kinneavy's *A Theory of Discourse*. Kinneavy's rhetorical triangle offers a starting point for rhetorical analysis by describing rhetorical action in terms of the "rhetorical situations" in which rhetorical action occurs. The points of the triangle represent the rhetor (writer or speaker), the audience (reader or listener), and the message. The message is motivated by informative, persuasive, expressive, or literary purposes, and its interpretation, or "uptake," depends on audience knowledge, feelings, values, and beliefs. The sides of the triangle represent relationships among these component parts of the rhetorical act, and the space contained within the triangle represents language (and/or other media of message exchange).



All rhetorical action takes place within historical and cultural contexts that help to shape the social intentions and interpretations of human communicators. Religious and other cultural traditions, such as conventions of identity formation by gender, age, socioeconomic status, geographic location, education, and so forth, affect the ways we use language to accomplish social purposes.

Kinneavy has described four purposes of discourse as emphases on the four component parts of the triangle:

- *Informative purpose* casts primary emphasis on the message (e.g., textbooks, owner's manuals).
- *Persuasive purpose* emphasizes the audience, because the desired end of persuasion is the effect of the text on the audience (e.g., sermons, advertisements, campaign speeches).
- *Expressive purpose* emphasizes the speaker's or writer's own thoughts and feelings (e.g., diaries, rants, laments).
- *Literary purposes* call for special attention to language as an aesthetic medium (e.g., imaginative fiction, poems, humor).

Of course, these purposes rarely exist in isolation from one another; inevitably, the same text serves multiple purposes. For example, a newspaper headline may be primarily informative, but if it is crafted as a form of wordplay it also serves a literary purpose. A lyric poem generally serves expressive as well as literary purposes, and it may also entail persuasive and informative purposes. Long and complex texts, such as lectures, political addresses, investigative reports, textbooks, sermons, novels, trade books, and academic articles, are invariably intended to accomplish a variety of purposes. Students, as members of the academic community and as informed and responsible citizens, should learn to discern not only the propositional content but also the rhetorical forces of these texts.

Rhetorical reading, then, is an analytic process that begins as a search for rhetorical purpose along with verbal meaning. We conduct this search by asking questions of the text: not just *what* does the writer or speaker mean to say in this text or *how* does the author convey this meaning, but *who* is the writer or speaker, and *why* and *to whom* has he or she chosen to write or speak these particular words on this particular occasion? In short, rhetorical reading means analyzing verbal texts in social contexts, in terms of how texts signal the writers' intent through such strategies as word choice, arrangement of content, representations of self and audience, appeals to reason, and appeals to audience values and emotions.

Aristotelian Rhetorical Analysis

While practice in literary reading points students toward rhetorical reading through the analysis of stylistic features of texts, style (literary or otherwise) is only a part of rhetoric. Aristotle, writing from a culture where oral language predominated, described *style* as skill in expressing an argument cogently and eloquently and included this skill as one of the five canons, or principles, of rhetoric. The others, which must also figure in rhetorical analysis, include *invention* (finding available means of persuasion), *arrangement* (selection and assembly of argument for rhetorical effect), *memory* (ability to access stored propositional knowledge and linguistic resources on demand), and *delivery* (effective use of gesture, expression, and analogous textual features in writing to convey the intended message). When students practice rhetorical analyses in the AP English Language and Composition course, they are learning to recognize (and, in turn, to use) strategies from all five canons and to appreciate how textual strategies and features function in a variety of text types.

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Rhetorical analysis that embraces all five of Aristotle's principles should consider questions such as the following:

- **Style:** What language resources does the writer draw upon to shape and convey the message? To represent him or herself? To represent the audience? To appeal to audience feelings, beliefs, and values?
- **Invention:** What elements of historical, cultural, and social context inform the writer's message? How does the writer's relationship with the audience shape the message? How do modal approaches (e.g., description, narration, analysis, classification, definition, narration, comparison) function to shape the message?
- **Arrangement:** How does the organization of material affect the message and the relationship between writer and audience? What logic structures the writer's argument?
- **Memory:** For Aristotle, this meant mnemonic strategies for recalling the form and substance of a prepared oral text; for writers and readers, memory concerns prior knowledge that a writer brings to bear on a proposition or that a reader draws upon to interpret a text. What does the writer assume to be true? What does the writer assume the readers know? How does the writer connect past experiences and observations with present concerns?
- **Delivery:** For Aristotle, delivery meant elements of oral presentation. In writing, delivery involves presentation of the writer's character, or *ethos*, and includes argument, not only through stylistic choices such as diction and syntax, but also through conventions of written language conventions such as punctuation, spelling, and paragraphing.

Selecting Readings for the AP English Language and Composition Course

In the course, students are encouraged to consider the rhetorical purposes that shape a text, as well as the choices authors make to enact those purposes in language. Because the AP English Language and Composition course focuses on teaching students how writers structure persuasive texts and how they themselves can enter ongoing, public conversations through texts, the course outcomes are best achieved through the use of nonfiction texts instead of imaginative literature. Additionally, the reading in this course should include pre-twentieth-century texts as well as twentieth century and contemporary works from a variety of disciplines and genres.

Because the learning objectives of the course are complex and multiple, teachers must select course readings from a variety of potentially appropriate texts. The readings in the course should lead students to "listen" actively (in a spirit of inquiry) and broadly (across disciplines, history, culture, geography, and genres) to public conversations about consequential topics and questions. Selected readings should assist students in comprehending multiple perspectives on a topic and interpreting both long and short texts of various genres in print and other media (e.g., documentary films, graphic arts, photography). Readings should also serve as models of successful or unsuccessful rhetorical approaches.

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In reading the selected texts, students should practice *literal* comprehension skills (discerning the assertions or verbal meaning of the text) as well as *rhetorical* comprehension skills (discerning the motivation, intent, or purpose behind the message and assessing the real or potential impact or consequences of the message on real or imagined audiences). Collectively, selected readings should help students become flexible readers and writers, familiar with a variety of textual genres, able to adapt their reading strategies to the demands of many kinds of texts, and able to adapt their writing strategies to the demands of many audiences and situations.

"Consequential" topics matter because the questions we ask about them and the ways we decide to respond to them affect the present and future of ourselves and the things we value. Among the various perspectives students may encounter in the course readings are those of different academic disciplines, as the disciplines present public question-asking-and-answering traditions that entry-level college students must begin to consider. While the readings in a single course cannot provide in-depth exposure across *all* disciplines, they should demonstrate how academic expertise and other types of authority function in public discussion of consequential topics.

Controversial Textual Content

Issues that might, from particular social, historical, or cultural viewpoints, be considered controversial, including references to ethnicities, nationalities, religions, races, dialects, gender, or class, may be addressed in texts that are appropriate for the AP English Language and Composition course. Fair representation of issues and peoples may occasionally include controversial material. Since AP students have chosen a program that directly involves them in college-level work, participation in this course depends on a level of maturity consistent with the age of high school students who have engaged in thoughtful analyses of a variety of texts. The best response to controversial language or ideas in a text might well be a question about the larger meaning, purpose, or overall effect of the language or idea in context. AP students should have the maturity, skill, and will to seek the larger meaning of a text or issue through thoughtful research.

General and Topical Readers

Some AP English Language and Composition teachers may want students to explore ways that people inquire, argue, and deliberate on a variety of topics and questions. For this kind of course, many textbook publishers design "readers" that are divided into units, each featuring a collection of responses to a question that generates public controversy.

Trade Books

Contemporary trade books (investigative journalism, designed for the reading public instead of for the classroom) give students practice in reading complex, extended arguments that are historically and culturally situated. Unlike readers, which contain a collection of short texts offering various perspectives on a single

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topic, trade books generally provide a single, in-depth argument on a single topic. Authors of texts appropriate for study in this course include the following: Nicolas Carr, Dave Eggers, Jonathan Safran Foer, Jane Goodall, Malcolm Gladwell, Peter Singer, Rebecca Skloot, and E.O. Wilson. A good way to search for possible texts is to look at the *New York Times* Nonfiction Best Seller list.

Extended Texts

Books by important writers of past eras also provide students with practice in deciphering and responding to complex and extended arguments from historical and cultural settings different from their own. Authors of texts that might be used in the AP English Language and Composition course include Mary Wollstonecraft, Henry David Thoreau, Charles Darwin, and Rachel Carson.

Speeches

Because speeches emerge from particular rhetorical occasions, they are especially good for illustrating how arguments are successfully or unsuccessfully crafted to target particular audiences in particular situations in an effort to accomplish particular purposes. Authors of speeches suitable for the AP English Language and Composition course include Abraham Lincoln, Sojourner Truth, Chief Joseph, King George IV of England, F. D. Roosevelt, Martin Luther King Jr., Robert Kennedy, Indira Gandhi, Hillary Clinton, and Barack Obama.

Essays

From eighteenth-century journalists and pamphleteers to present-day essayists whose writing appears in newspapers, journals, and essay collections, the essay is a historically favored genre for the conduct of public conversation about consequential questions. Students should learn to distinguish between essays that serve primarily as personal expression or autobiographical narration and those that serve primarily as instruction, inquiry, or political or social advocacy. Students should also consider how essayists of all kinds participate in public discussion of consequential topics and questions. Well-known political and literary essayists appropriate for AP English Language and Composition reading lists include Samuel Johnson, Thomas Paine, Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Muir, Virginia Woolf, Martin Luther King Jr., Annie Dillard, John McPhee, Susan Sontag, Charles Lamb, Thomas De Quincey, Richard Rodriguez, Oscar Wilde, Scott Russell Sanders, Joyce Carol Oates, Alice Walker, David Sedaris, and Wendell Barry. However, contributions of less canonical "literary" essayists also have a place in the course and may come from opinion pages in newspapers and magazines, personal blogs, and organizational websites.

Popular-Culture Texts

Because the AP English Language and Composition course seeks to cultivate rhetorical reading skills, texts with persuasive purposes drawn from popular culture are suitable for inclusion in the course reading list. Advertisements, propaganda, advice columns, television and radio talk shows and interviews, newspaper

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columns, cartoons, political commentaries, documentary films, TED Talks, and YouTube videos are only a few examples of texts that represent contributions to public discussion of consequential topics and questions.

Imaginative Literature

Although public conversations about consequential topics and questions never unfold exclusively in poetry, short stories, novels, and plays, these forms of imaginative literature often play a part in public discussion. Since the AP English Language and Composition course emphasizes argumentation and rhetorical analysis, works of imaginative literature are appropriate only for use in the course if they were composed to accomplish a rhetorical purpose (e.g., George Herbert's *carpe diem* poetry, George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*) or are excerpts that enact particular rhetorical functions within literary texts (e.g., Marc Antony's "I Come to Bury Caesar" speech in *Julius Caesar*).

Images as Texts

Writing teachers have expanded their understanding of *texts* to include more than written words. Teachers of writing imagine how images, among other modes of communication, should be taught and included as part of authentic composing processes and contexts. Historically, visual texts predate alphabetic literacies; however, composing with images is ubiquitous in almost all writing contexts outside of school, where the double-spaced, one-inch margin essay containing only written words is still the dominant genre. In order to prepare students for writing contexts outside of school, writing teachers are expanding their notion of literacy to include a larger range of texts and technologies. In the AP English Language and Composition course, students should learn to analyze and evaluate the rhetorical use of images, graphics, video, film, and design components of print- and Web-based texts.

Visual texts are most commonly understood as images that either stand alone or can be combined with other modalities to communicate much like written texts. Images can be used to make or support arguments, as in the case of editorial cartoons or photographic journalism. Other images such as charts, graphs, and tables are effective in presenting large amounts of information in ways that make it accessible to readers. Such images are also particularly good at showing or suggesting cause-and-effect relationships or comparisons that can be meaningful to contemporary audiences. A quick Internet search of "infographics" yields a wide range of creative ways to present information, and twenty-first-century writers with increasing access to imaging software have the ability to create high-quality visuals to accompany written texts.

Images are not the only alternative to written texts finding their way into writing classrooms. Gunther Kress and the New London School[4] are famous for coining the term *multiliteracies* and advocating an approach to communication that

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4 Cazden, C. "A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures." *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(1) (1996): 60–92.

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includes written, visual, oral, gestural, spatial, and multimodal communication. Kress claims that these modalities do not all function the same way; they are not interchangeable, and he challenges us to consider how authentic communication in the world draws on different modes to communicate a message. Therefore, classroom writing assignments that focus exclusively on written texts ignore other commonly available means of persuasion and provide too limited a range of texts for students who need a much broader understanding of communication to function in the world.

Written texts without images still have a visual component because writers are often charged with considering how the layout and design of the page will affect audiences. Layout and design elements include fonts, text size, spacing, color, margins, and paper size and shape. While random or nonstrategic use of these features can be distracting, rhetorical choices of layout and design can be an important tool for writers of authentic texts and should be connected with genre and audience expectations.

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The Role of Technology and Textbooks

Technology

Writing technologies are most often understood as digital technologies, such as desktop programs (e.g., Word, InDesign, PowerPoint, iMovie) or Web applications (e.g., Twitter, Prezi, Wix, Facebook), that authors use to compose, revise, publish, or otherwise create and circulate their texts. While these are all legitimate forms of technologies used by authors to compose with words, images, sounds, and other media, it is important to realize that written language itself is a technology and that there is no writing without the use of technology. Pen and paper are writing technologies as much as a desktop computer, so even the staunchest traditionalist uses writing technologies as much as the most savvy users of new digital resources.

What is perhaps most important about writing technologies is that they are part of the composing contexts for writers. All writing technologies have affordances (things they allow or encourage) as well as constraints (things they disallow or discourage). Composing with a word processor, for instance, allows for and encourages revision, since the texts produced in this technology are easily rearranged and changed. And while something like cutting and pasting has long been used with composed type, it becomes even easier in digital environments, where simply pointing and clicking can move large chunks of texts within a document or from another source. Composing in a video program invites writers to explore the affordances of audio and video as well as written communication.

Technologies also allow for different configurations of writers and readers. A document shared in a cloud can be coauthored by people in different locations in a way paper documents cannot. Paper essays can be physically passed around and written on or taken home in ways that might be more accessible to some readers than some digital documents. Writers can access online essays with different devices and in different locations more easily than they can access a document saved to a personal or unshared hard drive. Presentations or ePortfolios created in Wix can more easily be made accessible to audiences both within and outside of school.

Any single writing technology in and of itself, then, isn't necessarily better or worse than any other. Rather, some technologies are better at doing certain things than others, and writers should consider these affordances and constraints as part of their rhetorical situations. Who are the audiences? How will the text circulate? When and how will the text be read, viewed, or listened to? What opportunities will others have to engage with, comment on, or modify the text? These are all questions that writers in authentic situations consider regarding writing and technology.

Textbooks

Similarly, there are no unqualified guidelines or uses of textbooks in an AP English Language and Composition course. Different textbooks serve different purposes and can be used in a variety of ways based on students' needs in and out of the

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classroom. Language and composition textbooks usually fall into three basic categories and are most often combinations of those categories: readers, rhetorics, and handbooks.

Readers, as the name suggests, contain a collection of texts for student readers and are often used to model genres or language forms, to promote invention by helping students to think about topics before writing, and to provide texts for rhetorical analysis. By considering how writers approach purpose, audience, arrangement, style, logic, emotional appeals, and so forth, students get ideas about how they can construct their own compositions. Most readers include texts written by recognizable and authoritative authors, and some include student writing. The key to selecting a good reader for AP English Language and Composition is finding a text with a variety of compelling nonfiction works that can serve as models for the kinds of rhetorical reading and writing that are emphasized in the course.

Rhetorics explain rhetorical principles and often include sections on the kinds of writing students produce in school, such as research-based essays or arguments. These texts are most often written by teachers and are organized around rhetorical principles and/or written processes. They are written with students as the primary audience, offering guidance in the decision-making processes they will undertake as writers, often prompting them with short readings, discussion questions, or activities that build toward strong writing practices. The key in selecting a good rhetoric for an AP English Language and Composition course is making sure it aligns with the values and progression of the course. If a particular course doesn't emphasize narrative or personal writing, it would be best to avoid a textbook that features memoir writing or personal voice as a primary theme. Rhetoric textbooks often develop a small number of themes or threads, which may or may not align well with a particular course.

Handbooks include content on grammar, punctuation, usage, style, and documentation. These books are rarely taught cover-to-cover, and there is no evidence that suggests having students complete decontextualized handbook exercises helps reduce errors in their writing. Rather, handbooks are best used as a resource for writers. Students can use a handbook like a reference work when they have questions or when teachers or peers point out recurring problems in their texts. If students can apply the concepts in their own writing, they are more likely to internalize and learn the rules than when they confront these rules and concepts in isolation from actual writing. Handbooks often offer sections on MLA, APA, or other documentation styles to help with in-text citations and bibliographies. Most material found in handbooks is becoming readily available online, but some students and teachers like the accessibility of hard copies.

Many textbooks combine the main elements of these readers, rhetorics and handbooks. Selecting a textbook with the right balance and emphasis is important for AP teachers. A book that works counter to the emphasis of the course can be frustrating, while a book with the right combination for the particular curricular context can be a wonderful resource. In any case, most textbooks do not need to be read from cover to cover; educators should draw on them as needed for particular purposes.

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Writing

Writing from Source Materials

Because source-informed argument (a form of research writing) is the predominant type of writing students must perform in their undergraduate coursework, college composition courses typically teach students to select and read primary and secondary research sources carefully and critically, summarize the propositional content of their sources, and synthesize material from multiple sources to compose informed and well-reasoned, original arguments. In teaching research skills, college composition courses stress the need for students to clearly acknowledge the contributions of their sources (whether these contributions take the form of information, language, ideas, or perspectives) by citing those sources using the citation conventions of professional organizations such as the Modern Language Association (MLA), the University of Chicago Press (*The Chicago Manual of Style*), the American Psychological Association (APA), and the Council of Biology Editors (CBE). College composition and AP English Language and Composition students are also expected to learn that citation conventions vary according to the academic or other rhetorical context in which research findings are developed and communicated; during the course, students should acquire a basic understanding of how to search for reliable information about citation requirements in different academic contexts.

Organization of Writing

Like the college course, the AP English Language and Composition course enables students to comprehend and critically analyze a wide variety of complex texts and to write prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with scholarly readers. With an emphasis on authentic communication, an AP English Language and Composition course should help students move beyond such programmatic responses to writing assignments as the five-paragraph essay. While such formulaic writing offers organizational structure that can help insecure, novice writers begin to put their ideas on the page, prolonged and exclusive reliance on such formulas encourages a rigid adherence to language form over language function. The AP English Language and Composition course should encourage students to become flexible writers, able to assess and respond effectively to a wide variety of rhetorical demands. Students should therefore learn to design their own effective organizational plans by taking into consideration rhetorical variables such as purpose, audience, and situation. Exposure to a wide variety of organizational models in the reading materials used in the course may help students broaden their own repertoires of organizational strategies.

Writing Process

College writing programs recognize that skill in writing proceeds from students' awareness of their own composing processes: the ways they explore ideas, draft, revise, and polish their work for their audiences. Accordingly, most first-year college

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composition courses call students' attention to their own experiences of writing as a process by assigning writing projects that proceed through several stages or drafts, with revision aided by feedback from teachers and peers. Likewise, the AP English Language and Composition course should offer students opportunities to recognize and develop their own writing processes, helping them to realize that no single composing process works for all writers in all situations. To the extent that it uses peer review as a strategy for developing students' control of their writing process, the AP course should teach students to assume the role of the skeptical academic reader: one who reads to understand content, not simply to judge formal correctness, and one who asks challenging questions rather than merely affirming or rejecting the writer's assertions. Teachers can promote these literacy skills by modeling the academic reader's role in their own oral and written responses to student writing.

Argumentation

While the AP English Language and Composition course should offer students several opportunities to write in a variety of modes of discourse, teachers should allow a significant amount of time to foster student understanding of the intricacies of argumentation through critical thinking experiences that allow students to:

- Read and analyze different kinds of arguments (definitional arguments, arguments of evaluation, causal arguments, proposals).
- Examine different structures of argumentative writing (classical argument, Rogerian argument, Toulmin argument) that help move an argument forward (Lunsford and Ruszkiewicz).
- Analyze the unique rhetorical features of arguments that demonstrate how language performs social action that accomplishes particular purposes or intents. Such features include appeals (e.g., ethos, pathos, logos), structural choices (e.g., inductive vs. deductive reasoning, author's purpose), and argumentative moves (e.g., concession, rebuttal).
- Examine the appropriateness of using different kinds of evidence to support a claim. Such evidence could include anecdotes and observations, facts and statistics from experts in a variety of fields of study, arguments of respected authorities, other outside sources, or personal experience.
- Assess the critical role of audience in writing an effective argument. Students need to learn to challenge their own assertions and to provide substantial evidence to explain and justify a position to an often skeptical audience.
- Effectively synthesize information and perspectives from research sources to enter an intellectual conversation and develop one's own position on the topic.
- Develop the habit of thinking about argument as a way to participate in a conversation of an unresolved question, instead of engaging the issue as an adversary (Graff, Birkenstein, and Durst).

The goal is for students to construct a clear, rhetorically sound argument that supports an assertion with convincing evidence, using a structure that advances the argument logically and persuasively.

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Classical Argument

Although Aristotle and Cicero devised a system of argumentation over 2,000 years ago, the elements of classical oration still influence contemporary attitudes and styles of argumentation. Anyone writing prior to the twentieth century had no other model than classical oration; therefore, many of the world's greatest speeches and documents are written using that structure. Even the more contemporary Rogerian and Toulmin models are based upon the components of classical argument.

Some examples of arguments that use the classical model include the following:

- "Debtors' Prisons" by Samuel Johnson
- "On War" by James Boswell
- "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" by Frederick Douglass
- "Shakespeare's Sister" by Virginia Woolf
- "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King Jr.
- "Affirmative Action: The Price of Preference" by Shelby Steele

Rogerian Argument

Carl Rogers, an American psychologist, developed a more contemporary and nonconfrontational method of argumentation. Rhetoric scholars Richard E. Young, Alton L. Becker, and Kenneth L. Pike identified four stages of Rogerian argument"[5]:

1. **Introduction**
   - Describes an issue, a problem, or conflict with sufficient evidence
   - Demonstrates respect for alternative positions
2. **Contexts**
   - Describes the contexts in which alternative positions may be valid
3. **Writer's Position**
   - States a position on the issue
   - Presents circumstances in which that position would be valid
4. **Benefits to Opponent**
   - Explains to opponents how they would benefit from adopting the writer's position

Toulmin Argument

Stephen Toulmin, a British philosopher, is credited for developing a "practical tool for understanding and shaping arguments in the real world" (Lunsford and

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5 Brent, D. "Rogerian Rhetoric: An Alternative to Traditional Rhetoric." In *Argument Revisited, Argument Redefined: Negotiating Meaning in the Composition Classroom*, edited by Barbara Emmel, Paula Resch, and Beborah Tenny, 73–96. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996.

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Ruszkiewicz, p. 132). Rather than designate a certain organizational plan for an argument, the Toulmin model presents critical components that should be included in any type of argument:

- **Claim:** Presents a controversial or debatable claim the writer plans to defend
- **Evidence:** Provides reasons and examples to support the claim from a variety of sources (personal experience, anecdotes and observations, facts and statistics, authorities or experts in the field of study)
- **Warrant:**
  - Makes a logical and persuasive connection between a claim and the evidence supporting it
  - Proposes a general principle that enables the writer to justify the move from a reason to a specific claim
  - Presents a shared value or principle with the audience
- **Qualifiers:** Includes words and phrases that place limits on claims
- **Conditions of rebuttal:** Addresses potential objections/alternative viewpoints

Some excellent examples of arguments using the Toulmin model include the following:

- "In Praise of the F Word" by Mary Sherry
- "The Separation of Church and State" by Stephen L. Carter
- "If Black English Isn't a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?" by James Baldwin
- "On Natural Death" by Lewis Thomas

Teaching Language, Grammar, and Style in AP English Language and Composition

Teaching students how to use grammar and style for written communication is more complicated than presenting rules and exercises. Standards, when employed appropriately, enhance the effectiveness and comprehensibility of written communication. AP English Language and Composition and college composition teachers need to explain the conventions of Standard Written English (SWE) and help students become mindful of those conventions in the writing process. The writing teacher must have a plan for not just *what* to say about SWE but also when to help students learn about SWE.

The AP English Language and Composition Development Committee advocate a rhetorical view of grammar and usage, or using SWE in the service of rhetorical purpose and function. Taking this rhetorical perspective on grammar does not mean ignoring the norms of SWE; on the contrary, a rhetorical view of grammar means articulating a purposeful rationale for linguistic choices. Students should understand that SWE is the preferred dialect of academic and professional discourse, so the use of this dialect serves to convey a writer's credibility and authority in academic and professional contexts.

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Assumptions for Teaching a Rhetorical Perspective on Grammar

Grammar standards are best explained to students as norms rather than rules. Grammatical norms are social conventions for structuring language, and students should learn to use them according to the social contexts in which they are writing. Mastering the norms of SWE helps students anticipate and meet reader expectations in academic, legal, and other professional contexts. Sometimes violating the norms of SWE can have a negative effect on readers. For example, if writers use idiomatic expressions in unexpected ways, readers may not understand the intent behind the usage. Similarly, if writers do not use verb tenses consistently, readers may become confused about the sequence of events being described. Or, if writers produce multiple lengthy, run-on sentences, readers may feel bombarded with too much new information to process or may become confused about relationships among the many ideas and propositions being offered. Students' choices about sentence structure, active or passive voice, punctuation, and other grammatical elements should reflect their rhetorical decisions about language use and conveying specific meaning.

Additional Reading

Ferris, Dana. *Treatment of Error in Second Language Student Writing* (2nd ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2011.

Hopper, P. J. *A Short Course in Grammar: A Course in the Grammar of Standard Written English*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1999.

Hopper, P. J. "The Ideal of Consistency in Thinking about Language." *Southwest Journal of Linguistics* 19, no 1 (1999): 1–10.

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Synthesis

The rhetorical analysis of multiple sources in the inquiry process we know as *research* presents the same demands as the rhetorical analysis of a single speech, letter, or essay, with one large exception: the development of a much fuller context. While the analysis of a single text in isolation certainly benefits from an understanding of the context in which it was composed and published or delivered, the analysis of multiple sources in concert with one another broadens the context, provided that these sources represent different, often opposing stakeholders in a given situation.

The synthesis process may serve various purposes. For example, synthesis may lead to an evaluation of a particular decision, or it may generate an argument for one of several possible options. Alternatively, synthesis may produce not an argument or a judgment but a more comprehensive understanding of the question or problem. This explanatory (or Rogerian) use of synthesis yields a deeper appreciation of the complexity of the topic under examination. Students performing this type of synthesis may conclude by considering the factors, perspectives, investments, and so forth that underlie discussions of a controversial topic. Because synthesis serves a multitude of purposes, synthesis tasks in the AP English Language and Composition course may assume a variety of forms, such as submitting a proposal, developing an original definition, or creating an appropriate plan.

How students approach synthesis depends largely on their ability to read texts rhetorically. By fully understanding relationships among writers, audiences, and purposes, students will recognize writers of the sources they consult as participants in conversations about specific questions. Additionally, students will discover that by attending to a variety of viewpoints and arguments they develop a critical and informed understanding of the controversy and gain the authority to enter the conversation themselves. Students will find that the sources they consult may agree with one another on some points but not on others; that they may represent different perspectives, values, and assumptions; and that they may support or supplement one another or call one another's positions into question.

There are three distinct manifestations of synthesis:

- **Source-based synthesis:** Body paragraphs feature sources in conversation with one another. Sources agree with, disagree with, or qualify each other, and such an approach toward synthesis is recognizable for both writers and readers. Typically, these sources align based upon content or position.
- **Conceptual synthesis:** Students determine the key factors, concepts, or categories of a particular issue. They may see, for example, that one source is representative of a Keynesian approach toward economics, or that another source represents a more conservative or liberal approach toward a topic. Typically, such writers have had prior experience in the process of rhetorical invention.
- **Synthesis of voice:** Writers have adopted the vernacular and cadence of those involved with the existing conversation.

The following are suggested steps for engaging students in the synthesis process.

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Step 1: Authentic Inquiry

Synthesis of sources should be a process of authentic inquiry motivated by questions for which readers genuinely want answers, not by desire to affirm preexisting positions. While it is entirely possible, and perhaps even worthwhile, for readers to commence research with some inclination or predisposition about a given topic, successful synthesis means proceeding with an open mind and finding an array of sources that satisfactorily broadens the context of one's research question. Part of authentic inquiry is an understanding of *rhetorical invention*, or the processes by which students — while they are thinking and reading — determine how the issues they are examining can be viewed from multiple perspectives.

What students experience in responding to the synthesis question on the AP English Language and Composition exam is not authentic inquiry; the source materials that accompany the prompt may be seen as *products* of authentic inquiry representing multiple perspectives that students must consider and weigh against one another — or synthesize — in order to compose a response that is informed by the sources and situated in the conversation they represent. To promote authentic inquiry in the AP English Language and Composition classroom, teachers must offer students the experience of creating authentic original questions, searching for answers, and developing informed responses to these questions. Students must have the experience of entering into unfamiliar conversations: transformative research encourages students to change or develop their positions, while transactional research merely affirms the opinions that students already hold.

Step 2: Linking the Sources

In source-informed argument, the predominant (though by no means the only) mode of college writing, effective synthesis begins with understanding others' positions, views, or arguments. Students must comprehend the major claims in the texts they consult, understand how these claims are substantiated, and identify how they might appeal to intended or unintended audiences. Students then need to know how to develop their own original arguments by acknowledging and responding to the claims they've encountered in their sources. Students must be careful to avoid misattributing claims or oversimplifying an argument. Such an approach reflects a superficial reading of the sources or a refusal to consider points of view that conflict with a writer's preconceived position.

Step 3: The Source-Informed Argument

Strong arguments developed through synthesis of multiple sources generally exhibit the following qualities:

- **Sophistication of thought:** Sometimes referred to as *complexity*, sophistication means looking at multiple perspectives, arguments and counter-arguments, and broader implications of particular events or decisions. Implications of arguments or positions are important for students to consider, as they often rely upon hypothetical examples abstracted from the real world of cause and effect; the

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challenge for students is to present implications as concretely as possible, based upon available evidence.

- **Effectiveness (development) of argument:** The completeness of an argument's development enhances its persuasiveness. Such development may mean an in-depth analysis of a few sources or a broad review of a wide range of sources.
- **Unity/Coherence:** Coherent, or unified, arguments — with or without sources — develop logically; the writer's own position emerges from a thoughtful consideration of the sources. An important marker of coherence is the use of idea-based transitions, often topic sentences of body paragraphs that move the argument forward in ways alluded to in "sophistication of thought." Another marker of coherence is the careful selection of the sources that "speak to one another." A coherent approach to synthesis requires students to consider the conversation among sources rather than regarding individual sources in isolation.

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Classroom Assessments

Formative and Summative Assessment

Assessment of student writing should promote the course goal of cumulative development of skills. When assessing student work throughout the course, teachers should include feedback on how students have demonstrated the skills they have been practicing, how they might improve on those skills, or how they might move on to incorporate more skills into their repertoire. For example, a common sequence of writing tasks in the AP English Language and Composition course is to have students first develop their skills in rhetorical analysis as they study the ways in which a writer supports a particular claim. Then, students create their own arguments, applying some of the techniques they've studied in rhetorical analysis.

A skill-driven curriculum emphasizes formative assessment. Students should be given multiple opportunities to attain mastery of the course objectives. Formative assessments provide feedback to students about their performance at a time and in a way that will help them improve their performance either on that particular task or on a future task. Formative assessments should also be used as instructional planning tools, helping teachers identify topics or skills that require additional instruction. In either case, the emphasis of formative assessments should provide teachers and students with information about student learning, and grading or scoring should be de-emphasized.

Summative assessments, on the other hand, usually provide a single, summary evaluation of student performance. A summative assessment might be a grade students receive on an in-class essay that is not expected to be revised or resubmitted; it summarizes and evaluates the student performance at the end of the writing process.

Particularly important for AP English Language and Composition teachers is the premise that assessment contexts matter. An assessment that is appropriate and successful in one environment may be neither in a different context. The AP Exam, for instance, is a single assessment context with a number of constraints that distinguish exam writing from classroom writing. The AP Exam provides a summative assessment, in the form of a numerical score, on a timed writing sample that isn't expected to be revised and isn't part of a student's classroom learning process. It is an extracurricular exam that summarizes a student's performance on several writing tasks.

Classroom assessments should be designed with a different purpose in mind: to help students improve their writing skills. Formative assessments should be used as much as possible to provide students with feedback in service of this goal; conversely, it is inappropriate for teachers to rely heavily on summative assessments that don't provide opportunities for student learning and growth. Teachers should take advantage of opportunities to provide feedback in different settings (e.g., peer group responses, student-teacher conferences, workshops, written comments on drafts) with the goal of improving student agency and ability.

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Portfolios

One of the most significant developments in writing assessment over the past several decades is the writing portfolio, which can be used for formative and summative purposes. Portfolios can be used to check student performance, progress, or learning at a specific point in time. They can be used to facilitate writing as a process, with students collecting and then revising selected works for formative or summative assessment. They can also be used as a demonstration of student learning and progress over a period of time.

Kathleen Blake Yancey has codified three essential characteristics of portfolio assessment that cross educational contexts: collection, selection, and reflection.[6]

- **Collection:** Portfolios necessarily provide more than one sample of student writing. This is important for a number of reasons. Single writing samples can be an anomaly of student performance; perhaps the student didn't engage with a particular prompt or had a bad experience developing an argument on a single sample. Multiple samples give assessors more confidence that they are seeing an accurate representation of the student's work. Just as important, writing competencies are increasingly complex, so they rarely can be demonstrated in a single piece of writing. Consider, for example, competencies in addressing different genres to different audiences in and out of school settings. How could a student demonstrate this flexibility and range of abilities in a single document? Multiple samples of student work offer a broader and more comprehensive view of student performance. One characteristic of good writers is their ability to adapt to different rhetorical contexts, and portfolios can accommodate that quality.
- **Selection:** Another important component of portfolio assessment is student selection of writing samples from a larger body of work. This component is often missing from portfolio systems that either dictate to students what to include in the portfolio or simply become a repository for every piece of writing a student has completed in the course. The student selection process is essential because it provides students an opportunity to consider the assessor as an audience, which informs their selection of writing samples that they think best represents themselves as writers to that audience. Should they include professional writing samples? Should they have all academic argument essays? Should they include electronic samples of writing, even if they are less formal? These kinds of questions are important for students to consider, and their success in developing the portfolio can in part be evaluated by the choices they make. The worst case scenario for a portfolio is a paper dump into a physical or electronic folder that requires the teacher or other readers to sort through and try to determine which compositions should be evaluated.
- **Reflection:** Many portfolio advocates maintain that reflection is the most important part of the process, because in reflective texts students articulate their selection process, account for revision, self-assess their strengths and weaknesses, and/or provide a narrative to guide the reader through the portfolio. These moves for a writer are decidedly more audience focused than traditional academic papers and, when done well, can be the centerpiece for demonstrating student learning and

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6 Yancey, Kathleen Blake. *Portfolios in the Writing Classroom: An Introduction*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1992.

development. Not all reflection is equally compelling, however, and it is a writing skill that must be taught. Students need to be guided into reflection and shown how to make thoughtful connections among various parts of the portfolio. When reflection is done systematically and students are guided through the process, they can internalize reflective habits of mind, becoming lifelong learners with the ability to use reflection to evaluate their own writing, relying less on teachers and outside readers to help them improve as writers.

Electronic portfolios, or ePortfolios, have the technological capability of accommodating more than just written work; they are digital spaces that allow for a range of artifacts, including student-produced videos and other visuals, Web-based projects, and a variety of other documents. Accessible sites like Weebly or Wix provide students with free space to design or use templates to present their work, and potential applications of the technology are endless. While ePortfolios may not serve every student in every situation, when used well they can provide students with a range of opportunity to develop as writers and showcase their work to audiences in and out of school.

Feedback

Teachers equate feedback with written commentary on student papers. It is important, however, to understand the range of contexts in which feedback can occur, especially in relation to the number of students and texts most teachers work with in any given year. In order to maximize formative feedback, teachers should take advantage of mechanisms such as peer feedback, writing workshops, group feedback, miniconferences, and other nonwritten commentary on student writing.

Written comments can take a number of forms as well, ranging from endnotes to marginalia to copyediting and proofreading, so even written feedback assumes a range of contexts. Many articles and books advise teachers on how to provide written commentary on student writing and suggest a range of strategies. Richard Straub's work on response is well known, and his seven strategies for response encapsulate many of the "big ideas" in response practice over the past several decades.[7] He suggests the following approaches to responding to student writing:

- Turn comments into conversation.
- Do not take control of a student's text.
- Give priority to global concerns of content, organization, and purpose before getting overly involved with style and correctness.
- Limit the scope and number of comments (more isn't better).
- Select your focus according to the stage in the writing process.
- Gear comments to individual students.
- Make frequent use of praise.

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7 Straub, Richard. *The Practice of Response: Strategies for Commenting on Student Writing*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2000.

While these principles seem sound, perhaps the most important thing a teacher should consider when providing responses to student compositions is that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Grading rubrics, the most efficient and standardized of all response methods, fail to recognize the value in customizing the response to individual students and contexts. While they may address some concerns about reliability and time, rubrics are the most mechanical form of feedback short of automated essay score (AES) and work against the human and humane forms of feedback and response long valued by educators. The scoring rubrics for AP English Language and Composition Exams, for example, are developed to facilitate efficient and accurate scoring at the AP Exam Reading; they are not, however, necessarily well suited for providing individual students with useful information about his or her writing in class. Feedback that models real communication from one human being to another is more likely to be meaningful to student writers and helps to promote the best practices of teaching and learning.

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College Board Resources

The following resources are integral in assisting teacher development of an AP English Language and Composition course:

AP Central

(**apcentral.collegeboard.org**)

This site features the following resources for teachers:

- archived exam questions with scoring guides, sample responses, and explanations
- schedules of professional development opportunities, including summer workshops and year-round training
- recommended readings
- recommended textbooks and resources that have been reviewed by AP English Language and Composition and/or college writing instructors

The AP English Online Teacher Community

(**https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/web/apenglish**)

This online community provides individualized responses to queries about the course. Participants may follow distinct threads of discussion, download effective lesson plans and instructional resources, or pose their own questions for feedback from the national community at large.

AP Summer Institutes

Perhaps the most effective preparation for teaching a course in AP English Language and Composition is to participate in a one-week summer institute. The information for these institutes is available on the AP Central website (**http://professionals.collegeboard.com/prof-dev/workshops/summer-institutes**).

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Connections Between AP English Language and Composition and AP Capstone

AP Capstone (**www.collegeboard.org/apcapstone**) is an innovative diploma program that provides students with an opportunity to engage in rigorous scholarly practice of the core academic skills necessary for successful college completion. AP Capstone is built on the foundation of two courses — AP Seminar and AP Research — and is designed to complement and enhance the in-depth, discipline-specific study provided through AP courses. It cultivates curious, independent, and collaborative scholars and prepares them to make logical, evidence-based decisions.

The goals of the AP English Language and Composition course and the AP Capstone program are mutually reinforcing in a number of ways. Both seek to strengthen student performance of fundamental academic activities: critical inquiry, analysis, synthesis, and argumentation. Both stress the development of reading and writing skills but also acknowledge the increasing influence of nonprint and nonmanuscript media in public conversations about consequential topics and questions. Both recognize the pedagogical importance of sustained inquiry and composition processes, providing students with time and guidance for complex and long-term intellectual projects. Both provide instruction in the component skills of analysis and synthesis, defining these intellectual operations as essential elements of critical inquiry and necessary preliminaries to critical argumentation. Both encourage students to think, listen, speak, read, write, and take action across disciplines and beyond the academic community. With their interdisciplinary curricula, both the AP course and the Capstone program seek to broaden the range of student inquiry and encourage flexible use of a variety of critical-thinking skills. Both offer curricula focused on skills rather than content in a course of study designed to help students develop the capacity to pursue their own questions and articulate their own decisions and commitments in intellectually responsible ways.

Significant differences, however, exist between the two courses. The Capstone program is primarily focused on learning to conduct and communicate research, and thereby requires students to evaluate and select evidence from a variety of sources. While the AP English Language and Composition course also emphasizes the synthesis of information from source materials to inform one's own argument, the course's primary objective is the analysis of the ways that language and other elements of composition are used for rhetorical purposes.

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The AP English Language and Composition Exam

Every year the AP English Language and Composition Development Committee prepares an exam that asks students to demonstrate their mastery of reading and writing skills promoted by the course. To be sure, a single three-hour exam cannot measure how students perform all the literacy skills promoted in the diverse and complicated curriculum of the year-long AP English Language and Composition course. Although the course requires students to practice writing processes that involve extensive review and revision, the exam does not assess students' control of this process, nor can the exam assess all the component skills required by the extensive research and writing projects that form a significant part of most AP English Language and Composition courses. With a combination of multiple-choice questions and essay prompts, however, the exam asks students to apply several essential skills that figure prominently in every AP English Language and Composition course curriculum: reading comprehension of rhetorically and topically diverse texts, rhetorical analysis of individual texts in isolation, synthetic reading of multiple texts, and written argumentation.

The multiple-choice section of the exam features questions about four short passages, each about a different topic and written from the perspective of a different academic discipline, sociocultural position, or period in the evolution of written English. Typically these questions test students' comprehension of the literal meaning of the text, their ability to infer the writer's intended meaning from the formal features of the text (e.g., vocabulary, sentence structure, organizational pattern, grammatical and mechanical choices), and their ability to use basic academic terminology to discuss features and functions of written English. The multiple-choice section occupies 1 hour of the total 195-minute exam period; students' scores on this portion of the exam count for 45 percent of their total scores. Multiple-choice scores are based on the number of questions answered correctly; points are not deducted for incorrect answers, and no points are awarded or deducted for unanswered questions.

The free-response portion of the exam consists of three essay prompts:

1. The synthesis prompt requires students to address an issue by synthesizing information from multiple texts.
2. The analysis prompt requires students to analyze the rhetoric of a single text.
3. The argument prompt requires students to compose an argument supported by evidence and reasoning drawn from their own reading, observations, and/or personal experiences.

Ordinarily, the free-response section occupies 2 hours and 15 minutes of the total exam period, 15 minutes of which is allocated for students to read the sources accompanying the synthesis essay prompt and to plan a response. The remaining 2 hours are allotted for students to write their essay responses. The three essays in the written portion of the exam are read and scored by college composition and

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AP English Language and Composition teachers, using standardized procedures guided by nine-point, multidimensional rubrics tailored to the demands of individual questions.

Summary of Scoring Rubrics

At the annual AP Exam Reading, students' responses to the analysis, synthesis, and argument prompts are scored "holistically" — Exam Readers assess each essay as a whole performance instead of separately assessing individual features of the writing. Readers are trained to apply a nine-point scale that analyzes the quality of student responses by four descriptive categories: unsuccessful (score points 1 and 2), little success (3 and 4), adequate (6 and 7), and effective (8 and 9). A score of 5 represents a response that is inadequate and adequate in equal measure. It is important to remember that the nine-point scoring scale only applies to the free-response questions on the exam. The scores from the free-response section are then combined with the score from the multiple-choice portion of the exam, and the cumulative score is then converted to a 1–5 scale.

The skills collectively measured by each point of the scale are identified on a scoring rubric and illustrated by sample student essays. Each year, the Chief Reader for the exam oversees revision of the scoring rubrics to adapt them to the current year's writing prompts. Because the reading and writing skills measured by the exam remain essentially the same from year to year, annual changes in the scoring rubric tend to be minimal. However, as the focus and format of the free-response prompts vary from year to year, the terms of measurement must change accordingly. These annual changes in prompts and scoring rubrics reflect the broad coverage goals of the course and the rhetorical flexibility the course requires students to develop as college-level readers and writers. Despite these annual revisions, the rubrics are constant in directing Readers' attention to the same four general characteristics of student writing: (1) content development, (2) organization, (3) coherence, and (4) fluency and control of Standard Written English.

Each year before the AP Reading, high school and college teachers of the course select student samples from exam booklets to illustrate the holistic quality represented by all points of the scale. These samples generally represent different ways of achieving a particular holistic score point through relative strengths and weaknesses in the four major categories. After the Reading, the rubrics and student samples (with commentary by the Chief Reader) are published on the AP Central website (**http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam_information/2001.html**).

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Sample AP English Language and Composition Exam Questions

The following multiple-choice and free-response exam questions are typical of those used on past AP English Language and Composition Exams.

Sample Multiple-Choice Questions

***Questions 1–11.* Read the following passage carefully before you choose your answers.**
This passage is excerpted from an essay written in nineteenth-century England.

It has been well said that the highest aim in education is analogous to the highest aim in mathematics, namely, to obtain not *results* but *powers*, not particular solutions, but the means by which endless solutions may be wrought. He is the most effective educator who aims less at perfecting specific acquirements than at producing that mental condition which renders acquirements easy, and leads to their useful application; who does not seek to make his pupils moral by enjoining particular courses of action, but by bringing into activity the feelings and sympathies that must issue in noble action. On the same ground it may be said that the most effective writer is not he who announces a particular discovery, who convinces men of a particular conclusion, who demonstrates that this measure is right and that measure wrong; but he who rouses in others the activities that must issue in discovery, who awakes men from their indifference to the right and the wrong, who nerves their energies to seek for the truth and live up to it at whatever cost. The influence of such a writer is dynamic. He does not teach men how to use sword and musket, but he inspires their souls with courage and sends a strong will into their muscles. He does not, perhaps, enrich your stock of data, but he clears away the film from your eyes that you may search for data to some purpose. He does not, perhaps, convince you, but he strikes you, undeceives you, animates you. You are not directly fed by his books, but you are braced as by a walk up to an alpine summit, and yet subdued to calm and reverence as by the sublime things to be seen from that summit.

Such a writer is Thomas Carlyle. It is an idle question to ask whether his books will be read a century hence: if they were all burnt as the grandest of Suttees[1] on his funeral pile, it would be only like cutting down an oak after its acorns have sown a forest. For there is hardly a superior or active mind of this generation that has not been modified by Carlyle's writings; there has hardly been an English book written for the last ten or twelve years that would not have been different if Carlyle had not lived. The character of his influence is best seen in the fact that many of the men who have the least agreement with his opinions are those to whom the reading of *Sartor Resartus* was an epoch in the history of their minds. The extent of his influence may be best seen in the fact that ideas which were startling novelties when he first wrote them are now become common-places. And we think few men will be found to say that this influence on the whole has not been for good. There are plenty who question the justice of Carlyle's estimates of past men and past times, plenty who quarrel with the exaggerations of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, and who are as far as possible from looking for an amendment of things from a Carlylian theocracy with the 'greatest man', as a Joshua who is to smite the wicked (and the stupid) till the going down of the sun.[2] But for any large nature, those points of difference are quite incidental. It is not as a theorist, but as a great and beautiful human nature, that Carlyle influences us. You may meet a man whose wisdom seems unimpeachable, since you find him entirely in agreement with yourself; but this oracular man of unexceptionable opinions has a green eye, a wiry hand, and altogether a *Wesen*, or demeanour, that makes the world look blank to you, and whose unexceptionable opinions become a bore; while another man who deals in what you cannot but think 'dangerous paradoxes', warms your heart by the pressure of his hand, and looks out on the world with so clear and loving an eye, that nature seems to reflect the light of his glance upon your own feeling. So it is with Carlyle. When he is saying the very opposite of what we think, he says it so finely, with so hearty

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1 A suttee is a now-obsolete Hindu funeral practice.

2 Carlyle believed that great men, or heroes, shaped history through their personal actions and divine inspiration. Joshua, a military leader and successor to Moses, led the Jewish people to the Promised Land.

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conviction—he makes the object about which we differ stand out in such grand relief under the clear light of his strong and honest intellect—he appeals
80 so constantly to our sense of the manly and the truthful—that we are obliged to say 'Hear! hear!' to the writer before we can give the decorous 'Oh! oh!' to his opinions.

1. What is the relationship between the two paragraphs in the passage?
   (A) The first paragraph describes strengths of a writer that Carlyle exhibits, and the second discusses his legacy.
   (B) The first paragraph surveys various types of writers, and the second focuses on Carlyle.
   (C) The first paragraph describes Carlyle's critics, and the second depicts his supporters.
   (D) The first paragraph considers who influenced Carlyle, and the second lists those he influenced.
   (E) The first paragraph explains Carlyle's major ideas, and the second evaluates his predictions.

2. Which of the following best represents the author's intended audience?
   (A) Individuals who are fairly well acquainted with Carlyle's writing
   (B) Readers who are having trouble understanding Carlyle's prose
   (C) Writers who hope to produce books that are like Carlyle's
   (D) Instructors looking for different ways to teach Carlyle
   (E) Scholars seeking information about Carlyle's personal life

3. Lines 5–12 ("He is … noble action") contrast
   (A) the acquisition of skills and the possession of aptitude
   (B) the labor of reasoning and the exhilaration of acting
   (C) the dissemination of knowledge and the cultivation of intellectual and moral powers
   (D) the traits of practical students and those of creative thinkers
   (E) the benefits of learning and the rewards of teaching

4. The author uses the phrase "On the same ground" (lines 12–13) to set up a comparison between
   (A) the aims of mathematics and those of education
   (B) conceptually powerful writers and exemplary educators
   (C) intellectual challenges faced by writers and those faced by readers
   (D) the formulation of solutions and the identification of problems
   (E) scientific writing and inspirational writing

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5. On the basis of the first paragraph, Thomas Carlyle is best characterized as a writer who is
   (A) ambitious, seeking to increase the number of people buying his books
   (B) revolutionary, agitating his readers to adopt a radically new worldview
   (C) charismatic, enticing his readers to support his views and beliefs
   (D) provocative, compelling his readers to reach their own conclusions
   (E) masterful, overpowering his readers with a sense of awe and veneration

6. The "acorns" (line 38) represent
   (A) Carlyle's young children
   (B) Carlyle's less prominent contemporaries
   (C) ideas in Carlyle's books
   (D) books written about Carlyle
   (E) those who are critical of Carlyle

7. In lines 47–48, the author refers to "an epoch in the history of their minds" to
   (A) illustrate the ways in which other intellectuals disagreed with Carlyle
   (B) define the meaning of the title *Sartor Resartus*
   (C) question the continued relevance of Carlyle's ideas
   (D) describe the major impact that Carlyle had on other people
   (E) characterize the arduous process of reading *Sartor Resartus*

8. The author mentions the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (lines 55–56) primarily to
   (A) provide an example of what is indisputably "good" (line 52)
   (B) identify the book that discusses "past men and past times" (line 54)
   (C) acknowledge some of the concerns held by the "plenty" (line 54)
   (D) justify Carlyle's desire for "an amendment of things" (line 57)
   (E) explain Carlyle's inspiration for the theory of the "'greatest man'" (line 58)

9. Which rhetorical strategy does the author adopt in lines 44–63 ("The character … influences us")?
   (A) She goes on the offensive, berating opponents of Carlyle for their absence of wisdom, judgment, and foresight.
   (B) She acknowledges but discredits other arguments, accusing Carlyle's critics of misunderstanding the originality of Carlyle's ideas.
   (C) She claims that most people do not recognize Carlyle's genius, suggesting that only a discerning few are capable of doing so.
   (D) She cites facts to counter opposition to Carlyle's eminence, claiming that all of Carlyle's judgments are unassailable.
   (E) She gives examples of Carlyle's far-reaching influence, noting that even criticism of Carlyle implies praise.

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10. What purpose do lines 63–74 ("You may … own feeling") serve?
    (A) They contrast the appeal of a writer who merely confirms his readers' views with that of a writer who boldly challenges them.
    (B) They develop an analogy between the kinds of individuals people are attracted to and the kinds of writing they prefer.
    (C) They challenge the idea that writers modify their ideas to appeal to a wide range of readers.
    (D) They examine whether relationships based on shared ideas and interests are rewarding to both parties.
    (E) They provide examples from various writers in which the appearance of good and evil is deceptive.

11. In lines 75–83 ("When he … his opinions"), the author develops her rhetorical purpose by
    (A) contrasting "he" and "we" to set Carlyle apart and show how he is critical of everyone else
    (B) inserting dashes to highlight Carlyle's most influential ideas and opinions
    (C) employing dramatically urgent adverbs to create a surprising conclusion for the reader
    (D) delaying the conclusion of the independent clause to build up the reader's sense of anticipation
    (E) utilizing the parallel "Hear! hear!" and "Oh! oh!" to imitate a chorus of approval for Carlyle

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***Questions 12–24.* Read the following passage carefully before you choose your answers.**
This passage consists of excerpts from an essay published in the 1940s.

It is the fate of actors to leave only picture postcards behind them. Every night when the curtain goes down the beautiful coloured canvas is rubbed out. What remains is at best only a wavering, insubstantial phantom—a verbal life on the lips of the living. Ellen Terry was well aware of it. She tried herself, overcome by the greatness of Irving as Hamlet and indignant at the caricatures of his detractors, to describe what she remembered. It was in vain. She dropped her pen in despair. "Oh God, that I were a writer!" she cried. "Surely a *writer* could not string words together about Henry Irving's Hamlet and say *nothing*, *nothing*." It never struck her, humble as she was, and obsessed by her lack of book learning, that she was, among other things, a writer. It never occurred to her when she wrote her autobiography, or scribbled page after page to Bernard Shaw late at night, dead tired after a rehearsal, that she was "writing." The words in her beautiful rapid hand bubbled off her pen. With dashes and notes of exclamation she tried to give them the very tone and stress of the spoken word. It is true, she could not build a house with words, one room opening out of another, and a staircase connecting the whole. But whatever she took up became in her warm, sensitive grasp a tool. If it was a rolling-pin, she made perfect pastry. If it was a carving knife, perfect slices fell from the leg of mutton. If it were a pen, words peeled off, some broken, some suspended in mid-air, but all far more expressive than the tappings of the professional typewriter.

With her pen then at odds and ends of time she has painted a self-portrait. It is not an Academy portrait, glazed, framed, complete. It is rather a bundle of loose leaves upon each of which she has dashed off a sketch for a portrait—here a nose, here an arm, here a foot, and there a mere scribble in the margin. The sketches done in different moods, from different angles, sometimes contradict each other… .

Which, then, of all these women is the real Ellen Terry? How are we to put the scattered sketches together? Is she mother, wife, cook, critic, actress, or should she have been, after all, a painter? Each part seems the right part until she throws it aside and plays another. Something of Ellen Terry it seems overflowed

every part and remained unacted. Shakespeare could not fit her; not Ibsen; nor Shaw. The stage could not hold her; nor the nursery. But there is, after all, a greater dramatist than Shakespeare, Ibsen, or Shaw. There is Nature. Hers is so vast a stage, and so innumerable a company of actors, that for the most part she fobs them off with a tag or two. They come on and they go off without breaking the ranks. But now and again Nature creates a new part, an original part. The actors who act that part always defy our attempts to name them. They will not act the stock parts—they forget the words, they improvise others of their own. But when they come on the stage falls like a pack of cards and the limelights are extinguished. That was Ellen Terry's fate—to act a new part. And thus while other actors are remembered because they were Hamlet, Phèdre, or Cleopatra, Ellen Terry is remembered because she was Ellen Terry.

12. Which of the following statements is best supported by information given in the passage?
    (A) Terry never focused on one career; she was skilled at so many things that she did not excel in any one thing.
    (B) Terry was so clever an actress that her portrayal of a role seemed to change every night.
    (C) Shaw encouraged Terry to become a play-wright by carefully tutoring her in creating plots and characters.
    (D) Because Terry lacked confidence in certain of her skills, she never fully realized she was a person of rare talents and gifts.
    (E) Because Terry did not have natural talent for either writing or acting, she struggled to learn her crafts and became great through sheer willpower.

13. The author's attitude toward Terry can best be described as
    (A) superior and condescending
    (B) unbiased and dispassionate
    (C) sympathetic and admiring
    (D) curious and skeptical
    (E) conciliatory and forgiving

14. In line 1, "picture postcards" functions as a metaphor for the
    (A) published text of a play
    (B) audience's impressions of the actors' performances
    (C) critical reviews of plays
    (D) plays in which the actors in the company have previously performed
    (E) stage designer's sketches of sets and scenes

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15. The passage implies that the primary enemy of the "beautiful coloured canvas" and the "wavering, insubstantial phantom" (lines 3 and 4–5) is the
    (A) cost of producing plays
    (B) whims of critics
    (C) passage of time
    (D) incredulity of audiences
    (E) shortcomings of dramatists

16. The phrase "a verbal life on the lips of the living" (line 5) suggests that
    (A) performances live only in the memories of those who witness and speak of them
    (B) actors do not take the trouble to explain their art to the public
    (C) the reviews of critics have a powerful influence on the popularity of a production
    (D) dramatists try to write dialogue that imitates ordinary spoken language
    (E) audiences respond to the realism of the theater

17. What is the relationship of the second and third sentences (lines 2–5) to the first sentence (lines 1–2)?
    (A) They are structurally less complex than the first.
    (B) They are expressed in less conditional terms than the first.
    (C) They introduce new ideas not mentioned in the first.
    (D) They clarify and expand on the first.
    (E) They question the generalization made in the first.

18. The pronoun "it" (line 6) refers to which of the following?
    (A) "fate" (line 1)
    (B) "curtain" (line 2)
    (C) "canvas" (line 3)
    (D) "phantom" (line 5)
    (E) "life" (line 5)

19. The effect of italicizing the words "*nothing*, *nothing*" (line 13) is to
    (A) emphasize Terry's sense of frustration
    (B) indicate a sarcastic tone
    (C) suggest the difficulty of writing great parts for actors
    (D) link a clear sense of purpose to success in writing
    (E) imply that Terry's weakness in writing is her tendency to exaggerate

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20. The words "bubbled off" (line 19) and "peeled off" (line 28), used to describe the way Terry wrote, emphasize
    (A) polish and sophistication
    (B) thoughtfulness and application
    (C) bluntness and indiscretion
    (D) mystery and imagination
    (E) ease and spontaneity

21. Which of the following stylistic features is used most extensively in lines 25-30 ?
    (A) Inversion of normal subject/verb/object order
    (B) Repetition of sentence structure
    (C) Periodic sentence structure
    (D) Sentence fragments for emphasis
    (E) Use of connotative meanings that add complexity

22. The effect of mentioning an "Academy portrait" (line 32) is to
    (A) imply that Terry deserved to have her portrait painted by a great artist
    (B) suggest that Terry was adept at self-expression both in writing and in painting
    (C) clarify the informal nature of Terry's self-portrait through contrast
    (D) hint that Terry's self-absorption prevented her from writing about herself dispassionately
    (E) blame Terry for her rebellion against the conventions of art forms

23. The "sketches" (line 36) are most probably
    (A) responses to reviewers who have criticized Terry's acting
    (B) paintings by Terry of other actors
    (C) stage directions from playwrights
    (D) self-revelatory remarks
    (E) descriptions of characters Terry has portrayed

24. The author suggests that Shakespeare, Shaw, and Ibsen could not "fit" (line 46) Terry chiefly because
    (A) the parts they created did not allow Terry to make use of every aspect of her talents
    (B) their dramatic talents were focused on plot rather than on character
    (C) Terry was better at conveying certain kinds of characters and emotions than she was at conveying others
    (D) their plays were set in historical periods different from the one in which Terry lived
    (E) the speeches they wrote for their female characters were written in accents and dialects different from Terry's

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***Questions 25–37.* Read the following passage carefully before you choose your answers.**
This passage is taken from a book that examines Canadian book clubs.

So pronounced is the book-club phenomenon that the format has spread to other venues and media, the most famous of these being the 'book club' component of Oprah Winfrey's television talk show. Staged like an actual book-group meeting, with invited discussants and a cozy living-room setting, the Winfrey show can boost a featured title to instant bestsellerdom and turn authors into stars. There are now 'book clubs' online, in bookstores, and functioning as consumer focus groups for publishers.[1] Colleges, bookstores, and resorts have recently begun to develop 'readers' retreats.'[2] Newsletters, magazines, newspapers, and published guides advise readers how to find, establish, and manage successful clubs.[3]

The widespread popularity of these reading groups has even occasioned a form of 'book-club backlash.' In a newspaper opinion piece titled 'Why I Won't Join the Book Club,' one contributor expressed alarm that reading was becoming another scheduled activity to be slotted in 'like the trip to the gym and the grocery store'; self-improving readers 'pop' books as they would vitamin tablets. But books 'are not about schedules,' author Stephanie Nolen argues; rather, they are 'about submerging yourself … about getting lost, about getting consumed.'[4] Considerable attention was garnered by another article, detailing the darker side of some New York City reading groups. Headlined 'Book-Club Lovers Wage a War of Words' when reprinted by the *Globe and Mail*, it could equally well have been titled 'When Book Clubs Go Bad': 'No longer just friendly social gatherings with a vague continuing-education agenda, many of today's book groups have become literary pressure cookers, marked by aggressive intellectual one-upmanship and unabashed social skirmishing. In

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1 For an example of an online 'book club'—this one produced by a mass-market circulation women's magazine—see Conversations (Book Club) on Chateleine Connects at **http://www.chatelaine.com/living/chatelaine-book-club/**.

2 For example, Vancouver bookseller Celia Duthie is developing such 'retreats' at a country inn. There are discussion periods and visits by authors and, most importantly, time to read. See Keyes, 'Out of the Woods.'

3 Some popular guides are Greenwood et al., *The Go on Girl!*; Jacobson, *The Reading Group Handbook*; and Saal, *The New York Public Library Guide to Reading Groups*. A new entry to the field, developed with a particular eye to the needs of Canadian clubs, is Heft and O'Brien, *Build a Better Book Club*.

4 Nolen, 'Why I Won't Join the Book Club.'

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living rooms and bookshops, clubs are frazzling under the stress, giving rise to a whole new profession: the book-group therapist.'[5] The clubs that Elaine Daspin
40 describes here seem to be functioning as unconsciousness- rather than consciousness-raising sessions, where competitive readers battle for interpretive supremacy. While book-club therapists may well be confined to the rarefied worlds of the
45 Upper East Side or Long Island, authors of recent book-club guides reiterate the need to establish common purposes, regular routines, and guidelines for thorough preparation.

Clearly, the positives outweigh the pitfalls; book
50 clubs are in demand because they offer individual readers an extra dimension of appreciation and understanding. Yet despite the fact that shared discussion of literary texts is also the foundation of literary study in school, college, and university
55 classrooms, literary theorists and reader-response critics have yet to devote much attention to such shared and synergistic study, instead construing readers as isolates or abstractions. (Studies tend to focus on the emotional responses or cognitive
60 activities of individual readers, or to infer such reactions by examining the properties of a literary text.) But club and classroom participants know that there is something different, something added, about sharing and discussing literature with other people.

25. The organization of the passage can best be described as
    (A) personal narrative followed by analysis
    (B) empirical data followed by conjecture
    (C) nonjudgmental explanation of a current phenomenon followed by a question
    (D) descriptive analysis followed by a final judgment
    (E) condemnation of a practice followed by partial acceptance

26. In context, the author places the term "book club" in quotation marks in lines 3 and 9 in order to
    (A) show that these are humorous examples
    (B) highlight how formal some of these clubs are
    (C) reveal that the book clubs that appear online or on television are unsatisfactory
    (D) suggest that the term is being broadened beyond its original meaning
    (E) imply that many book club members do not like the term

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5 Daspin, 'Book-Club Lovers Wage a War of Words.' The piece originally appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*.

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27. The first paragraph (lines 1–15) serves to
    (A) explain why the author enjoys one way of reading
    (B) describe the extension of a particular activity into nontraditional areas
    (C) make generalizations that will be developed later
    (D) explore ways in which people can structure free time
    (E) detail the power of media and mass marketing to censor

28. According to lines 23–26, Stephanie Nolen's primary criticism of book clubs is that they
    (A) are too programmed
    (B) do not offer enough variety
    (C) cause readers to be anxious
    (D) overlook many classics
    (E) forego quality for quantity

29. The clubs referred to in line 39 are discussed in
    (A) the online discussion group of a particular book club
    (B) a study sponsored by book club participants
    (C) an editorial in a Canadian magazine
    (D) a guide written by Elaine Daspin
    (E) an article published in the *Wall Street Journal*

30. The "recent book-club guides" (lines 45–46) tend to emphasize
    (A) how book clubs need to be structured and regular in order to succeed
    (B) how difficult it is to start a book club in New York
    (C) how often even the best book clubs fail
    (D) the variety of reasons that people have for starting book clubs
    (E) the challenges of selecting books for discussion

31. The last paragraph (lines 49–64) marks a shift from
    (A) popular to academic contexts
    (B) supported to unsound generalizations
    (C) impersonal to personal examples
    (D) subtle irony to explicit sarcasm
    (E) neutral to negative characterization of book clubs

32. The function of lines 52–58 ("Yet despite … abstractions") is to
    (A) argue for the value of a particular literary theory
    (B) explain how important it is not to make abstract judgments
    (C) point out a discrepancy between teaching practices and literary theory
    (D) highlight the demand for a way to measure emotional responses to texts
    (E) explore the author's views about reading in isolation

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33. The final sentence (lines 62–64) serves to
    (A) conclude an argument begun in the first paragraph
    (B) suggest a probable cause for an ongoing phenomenon
    (C) argue that publishers need to pay more attention to book clubs
    (D) offer a final analysis of the phenomenon described in the second paragraph
    (E) explain why the author has chosen a particular field of study

34. One function of sentence 3 (lines 8–10) and footnote 1 is to
    (A) give an example of a group that earns money by reading
    (B) show that book clubs are not intended for literary scholars
    (C) note the connection between marketing and book clubs
    (D) cite one book club as a particular model of excellence
    (E) suggest the benefits of online discussion groups

35. It can be inferred from footnote 2 that "'Out of the Woods'" is
    (A) an article about a type of retreat
    (B) an exposé about fee-based book clubs
    (C) an essay about book club protocol
    (D) a meditation on favorite works by famous authors
    (E) an article about how to start a traditional book club

36. The function of footnote 3 is to
    (A) offer specific examples of one of the types of resources mentioned
    (B) convince the reader of the value of book clubs
    (C) test whether the reader is interested in particular books
    (D) evaluate tips on how to set up book clubs
    (E) compare the strengths and weaknesses of certain books

37. The information in footnote 2 is different from that in footnote 3 in that footnote 2
    (A) is critical while endnote 3 is neutral
    (B) assumes that readers do not like research while endnote 3 assumes that readers like research
    (C) is concerned with local book clubs while endnote 3 relates to global issues
    (D) primarily provides an illustration of a phenomenon while endnote 3 primarily lists resources
    (E) relates mostly to marketing while endnote 3 relates mostly to cultural conflicts in book clubs

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***Questions 38–50.* Read the following passage carefully before you choose your answers.**
This passage is excerpted from a nonfiction book published in the late twentieth century.

Climatologists speak of thunderstorms pregnant with tornadoes, storm-breeding clouds more than twice the height of Mount Everest; they speak of funicular envelopes and anvil clouds with pendant mammati and of thermal instability of winds in cyclonic vorticity, of rotatory columns of air torquing at velocities up to three hundred miles an hour (although no anemometer in the direct path of a storm has survived), funnels that can move over the ground at the speed of a strolling man or at the rate of a barrel-assing semi on the turnpike; they say the width of the destruction can be the distance between home plate and deep center field and its length the hundred miles between New York City and Philadelphia. A tornado, although more violent than a much longer lasting hurricane, has a life measured in minutes, and weathercasters watch it snuff out as it was born: unnamed.

I know here a grandfather, a man as bald as if a cyclonic wind had taken his scalp—something witnesses claim has happened elsewhere—who calls twisters Old Nell, and he threatens to set crying children outside the back door for her to carry off. People who have seen Old Nell close, up under her skirt, talk about her colors: pastel-pink, black, blue, gray, and a survivor said this: *All at once a big hole opened in the sky with a mass of cherry-red, a yellow tinge in the center*, and another said: *a funnel with beautiful electric-blue light*, and a third person: *It was glowing like it was illuminated from the inside.* The witnesses speak of shapes: a formless black mass, a cone, cylinder, tube, ribbon, pendant, thrashing hose, dangling lariat, writhing snake, elephant trunk. They tell of ponds being vacuumed dry, … chickens clean-plucked from beak to bum, water pulled straight up out of toilet bowls, … a wife killed after being jerked through a car window, a child carried two miles and set down with only scratches, a Cottonwood Falls mother (fearful of wind) cured of chronic headaches when a twister passed harmlessly within a few feet of her house, and, just south of Chase, a woman blown out of her living room window and dropped unhurt sixty feet away and falling unbroken beside her a phonograph record of "Stormy Weather."

38. The author develops the passage primarily through
    (A) accumulation of detail
    (B) pro-and-con argument
    (C) thesis followed by qualification
    (D) assertion supported by evidence
    (E) analysis of the ideas of other

39. The author is best described as
    (A) a curious individual who seeks out diverse information from a variety of sources
    (B) a serious scientist who is determined to learn more about the causes of these storms
    (C) an excited eyewitness who is too distracted to fear for personal safety
    (D) a confused novice who is unable to decide which claims are accurate
    (E) an ironic interpreter who comments on the failures and follies of others

40. Compared with that of the rest of the passage, the diction of lines 1–8 ("Climatologists … survived") is
    (A) informal and straightforward
    (B) technical and specialized
    (C) subjective and impressionistic
    (D) speculative and uncertain
    (E) understated and euphemistic

41. The statement "although … survived" (lines 7–8) is an admission that
    (A) details about technical equipment are of interest only to specialists
    (B) some tornadoes are so powerful that scientists cannot quantify them precisely
    (C) scientists have abandoned the effort to measure the wind speed of tornadoes
    (D) predicting the path a tornado will take is extremely difficult
    (E) precise measurement of wind speed will aid climatologists in categorizing tornadoes

42. Which of the following is true of the comparisons in lines 11–14 ("they say … Philadelphia")?
    (A) They emphasize the unpredictable nature of tornadoes.
    (B) They exaggerate the danger of tornadoes in order to make people cautious of them.
    (C) They use technical terminology in order to ensure accuracy of description.
    (D) They draw on familiar information to particularize an aspect of tornadoes.
    (E) They clarify the distinctions between the language of climatologists and that of weathercasters.

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43. The first sentence of the passage (lines 1–14) employs all of the following to convey the power and variety of tornadoes EXCEPT
    (A) abstract generalization
    (B) the jargon of climatologists
    (C) metaphor
    (D) parallel construction
    (E) varying degrees of formality

44. The passage implies that unlike hurricanes, tornadoes are not given human names because
    (A) there are too many of them
    (B) their destruction is not as great as that of hurricanes
    (C) they last too short a time
    (D) they move too erratically to be plotted
    (E) they can appear in any area of the world

45. When the passage moves from the first paragraph to the second, it also moves from
    (A) overview to illustration
    (B) analysis to argumentation
    (C) narration of the past to analysis of the past
    (D) assertion to definition
    (E) objective presentation to *ad hominem* argument

46. The phrase "as bald as if a cyclonic wind had taken his scalp" (lines 18–19) does all of the following EXCEPT
    (A) describe the grandfather with an image related to the cyclone
    (B) suggest a lighter tone for the paragraph
    (C) particularize the first of several sources of information mentioned in the paragraph
    (D) suggest the power of the tornado
    (E) express concern about the condition of the grandfather

47. In context, the image of being up under Old Nell's skirt (lines 23–24) is meant to suggest
    (A) safety
    (B) confusion
    (C) domesticity
    (D) familiarity
    (E) imprisonment

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48. Which of the following best describes the images in the last sentence of the passage (lines 32–43)?
    (A) A disdainful rehearsal of other people's experiences
    (B) A random listing of repulsive or frightening occurrences
    (C) A thorough review of absurd legends
    (D) A series of increasingly detailed and implausible events
    (E) A chronological account of major storms

49. The second paragraph of the passage relies especially on the use of
    (A) cautionary advice
    (B) colorful anecdotes
    (C) self-deprecating humor
    (D) extended analysis
    (E) terrifying juxtapositions

50. The passage ends on a note of
    (A) utter exhaustion
    (B) genuine relief
    (C) catastrophic destructiveness
    (D) ominous warning
    (E) lighthearted irony

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Answers to Multiple-Choice Questions

1 – A	14 – B	27 – B	40 – B
2 – A	15 – C	28 – A	41 – B
3 – C	16 – A	29 – E	42 – D
4 – B	17 – D	30 – A	43 – A
5 – D	18 – A	31 – A	44 – C
6 – C	19 – A	32 – C	45 – A
7 – D	20 – E	33 – B	46 – E
8 – C	21 – B	34 – C	47 – D
9 – E	22 – C	35 – A	48 – D
10 – A	23 – D	36 – A	49 – B
11 – D	24 – A	37 – D	50 – E
12 – D	25 – D	38 – A	
13 – C	26 – D	39 – A	

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Sample Free-Response Questions

The free-response questions on AP English Language and Composition Exams prompt students to respond to demonstrate three essential skills developed in the course: rhetorical analysis, synthesis, and argumentation (see definitions on pages 18–19). Each of the following sample prompts represents a single manifestation of those skill categories; in any given AP English Language and Composition Exam administration, the analysis, synthesis, and argument prompts present unique tasks to elicit student performance of these essential skills. Free-response prompts from any given exam administration may vary from the tasks described in these samples in the specific language used or tasks described, although the essential skills they ask students to perform will remain the same. To encourage flexible application of these skills, teachers should help students practice them in a variety of civic and academic contexts throughout the year. For a broad view of task variation in AP English Language and Composition free-response prompts, please see the list available on the AP Central website at **http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam_information/2001.html**.

Synthesis Prompt

Foods that have been genetically modified are widely produced and consumed throughout the world. Despite the growth in genetically modified (GM) foods, most people are unaware of the place of GM foods in the food supply. Producers of GM (also called biotech) foods insist that they are safe and desirable, especially as the rapidly increasing human population requires more food. Many scientists and health practitioners, however, maintain that GM foods are not just undesirable but dangerous, both to individuals and to ecosystems.

Carefully read the following seven sources, including the introductory information for each source. Then synthesize information from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-written essay that addresses this question: What should be the role of GM foods in the global food supply?

Use the sources to develop and explain your argument. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, and so forth, or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

Source A (Agadoni)

Source B (McKie)

Source C (graph/map)

Source D (Human Genome Project)

Source E (Cage)

Source F (University of Queensland)

Source G (Manda)

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Source A

Agadoni, Laura. "Is Genetically Modified Food Healthy?" **Livestrong.com**. July 9, 2011.

The following is excerpted from an article on a website devoted to healthful eating and living.

About GM Food GM food is grown and genetically engineered with genetic material that does not occur naturally. Scientists also select genes from one organism and transfer them to another. Scientists genetically modify food for various reasons—a main one is to improve crop production. Other reasons for tampering with Mother Nature are to lower the price of food and to make food more durable and resistant against plant diseases caused by insects or viruses or through increased tolerance towards herbicides.

Health Risks Because of the introduction of new genetic material, possible health risks could ensue. For example, to create insect resistant crops, scientists use a gene from soil bacteria called Bacillus thuringiensis. This BT gene is a toxin that kills insects that disturb crops and is supposed to be safe for humans. Monsanto, a U.S.-based multinational agricultural biotechnology corporation, uses this genetically modified gene for growing corn. Jeffrey Smith of the Institute for Responsible Technology, who wrote the bestselling books, "Seeds of Deception" and "Genetic Roulette: The Documented Health Risks of Genetically Engineered Foods," is concerned about the safety of BT toxin. He cites a study conducted by researchers at Sherbrooke University Hospital in Quebec that study found BT toxins in 93 percent of the 30 pregnant women tested and in 67 percent of non-pregnant women. The study has been accepted for publication in 2011 in the journal, "Reproductive Toxicology."

Allergies The U.S. started using BT corn in 1996, and many people are concerned about increased allergies because of this gene, according to WHO (World Health Organization). As of 2005, WHO has not found any allergic effects. However, Smith disputes that assessment, stating that the BT gene triggers immune system responses based on research conducted in Italy, which found that mice fed the Monsanto corn showed elevated antibodies associated with infections and allergies. The Italian study was performed on mice and was published in 2008 in the "Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry."

Other Health Risks According to WHO, gene transfer and outcrossing are other main concerns regarding GM foods. There's a danger that modified genes can turn out to be harmful for human health and that the body could develop antibiotic-resistant genes in response to transferred genes. Outcrossing occurs when food that is not approved for human consumption, but is approved for animal feed, appears in products made for humans. This happened before with maize, according to WHO.

Bottom Line You cannot lump all GM foods together because they all have different modified genes. WHO believes that with proper assessment, GM foods are not likely to present health risks. The benefits to be gained are plants that can withstand disease, crops with more nutrients and fish that can grow bigger.

"Is Genetically Modified Food Healthy?" by Laura Agadoni, from **Livestrong.com**, copyright by Demand Media. Used by permission.

Source B

McKie, Robin. "Genetically Modified Crops Are the Key to Human Survival, Says UK's Chief Scientist." *The Guardian* [U.K.]. January 22, 2011.

The following is excerpted from an article on the website of a major British newspaper.

Moves to block cultivation of genetically modified crops in the developing world can no longer be tolerated on ethical or moral grounds, the government's chief scientist, Sir John Beddington, has warned. He said the world faced "a perfect storm" of issues that could lead to widespread food shortages and public unrest over the next few decades. His warning comes in the wake of food riots in north Africa and rising global concern about mounting food prices.

"A number of very important factors are about to change our world," said Beddington, an expert in population biology. "Its population is rising by six million every month and will reach a total of around 9,000 million by 2050. At the same time, it is estimated that by 2030 more than 60% of the population will be living in cities and will no longer be involved in growing crops or raising domestic animals. And on top of that the world's population is getting more prosperous and able to pay for more food."…

Beddington said humanity had to face the fact that every means to improve food production should now be employed, including widespread use of new biotechnological techniques in farming. He stressed that no harm should be inflicted on humans or the environment. His remarks were made in advance of publication tomorrow of a major report, "The Future of Food and Farming."…

He emphasised the role of modern biotechnological techniques, including GM crops, in the future of global food production. "There will be no silver bullet, but it is very hard to see how it would be remotely sensible to justify not using new technologies such as GM. Just look at the problems that the world faces: water shortages and salination of existing water supplies, for example. GM crops should be able to deal with that."

Such remarks will enrage many environmental groups, who believe it is wrong for the west to impose a technology it has developed on the third world. But Beddington was adamant about the benefits of GM crop technology. "Around 30% of food is lost before it can be harvested because it is eaten by pests that we never learnt how to control. We cannot afford that kind of loss to continue. GM should be able to solve that problem by creating pest-resistant strains, for example. Of course, we will have to make sure these crops are properly tested; that they work; that they don't harm people; and that they don't harm the environment."

GM crops alone would not be sufficient to hold off widespread starvation, he added. No single approach would guarantee food security for humanity for the rest of the century. A widespread approach, including the development of proper sustainability, protecting fish stocks and changes to patterns of consumption, was also critical, he said. "This report was set up to find out if we can feed nine billion people sustainably, healthily and equitably. We can, but it will take many different approaches to crack the problem."

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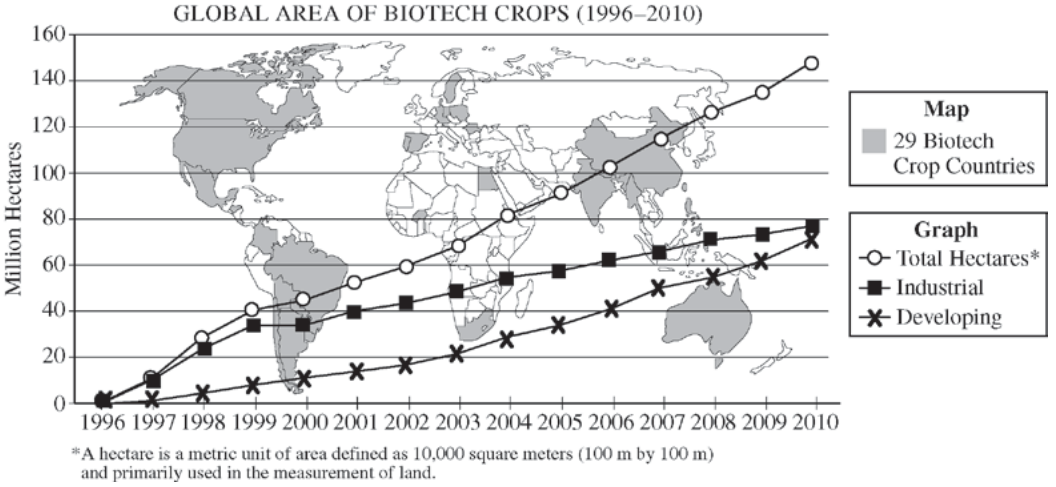
Almost a billion people now suffer serious food shortages and face starvation. "It is unimaginable that in the next 10 to 20 years that there will not be a worsening of that problem unless we take action now, and we have to include the widest possible range of solutions."

Copyright Guardian News & Media Ltd 2011.

Source C

James, Clive. "Brief 42: Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops." ISAAA. 2010.

The following chart is adapted from a yearly brief published by an international not-for-profit organization.



Source D

"Genetically Modified Foods and Organisms." *Human Genome Project Information*. United States Department of Energy Office of Science. November 5, 2008.

The following is drawn from an online article on genetically modified foods published by the U.S. Department of Energy's Human Genome Program.

Benefits

- Crops
  - Enhanced taste and quality
  - Reduced maturation time
  - Increased nutrients, yields, and stress tolerance
  - Improved resistance to disease, pests, and herbicides
  - New products and growing techniques
- Environment
  - "Friendly" bioherbicides and bioinsecticides
  - Conservation of soil, water, and energy
- Society
  - Increased food security for growing populations

Controversies

- Safety
  - Potential human health impacts, including allergens, transfer of antibiotic resistance markers, unknown effects
  - Potential environmental impacts, including: unintended transfer of transgenes through cross-pollination, unknown effects on other organisms (e.g., soil microbes), and loss of flora and fauna biodiversity
- Access and Intellectual Property
  - Domination of world food production by a few companies
  - Increasing dependence on industrialized nations by developing countries
  - Biopiracy, or foreign exploitation of natural resources
- Ethics
  - Violation of natural organisms' intrinsic values
  - Tampering with nature by mixing genes among species
- Labeling
  - Not mandatory in some countries (e.g., United States)
  - Mixing GM crops with non-GM products confounds labeling attempts
- Society
  - New advances may be skewed to interests of rich countries

U.S. Department of Energy Genome Programs: **http://genomics.energy.gov**

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Source E

Cage, Sam. "High Food Prices May Cut Opposition to Genetically Modified Foods." *The New York Times*. July 8, 2008.

The following is excerpted from an online article published by a major American newspaper.

In a Eurobarometer opinion poll in March, the number of European respondents saying they lacked information on genetically modified food fell to 26 percent, compared with 40 percent in the previous survey, which took place in 2005.

But 58 percent were apprehensive about the use of such crop technology and just 21 percent were in favor, down from 26 percent in a 2006 Eurobarometer survey on biotechnology.

"People do change attitudes, just gradually, because they become used to technologies," said Jonathan Ramsay, spokesman for Monsanto, the world's biggest seed company. "Consumers are looking at prices, consumers hear the stories about food production, growing population in the world, and I think people do understand that agriculture needs to be efficient."

Friedrich Berschauer, chief executive of the world's fourth-biggest seed producer, Bayer CropScience, believes that acceptance of genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, will be gradual.

"Long-term, I am certain that GMOs will be accepted," Berschauer said. "But I dare not give a forecast whether that will be in 5 years or in 10."

But critics of genetic modification say that the technology does not bring the benefits promised. A recent report by the organic group Soil Association concluded that yields of all major GM varieties are equivalent to or less than those from conventional crops.

"GM chemical companies constantly claim they have the answer to world hunger while selling products which have never led to overall increases in production," said Peter Melchett, Soil Association's policy director, "and which have sometimes decreased yields or even led to crop failure."

Geert Ritsema, a genetic engineering campaigner at Greenpeace International, said that proponents of biotech crops are using high market prices to scare consumers into thinking that their food will become too expensive unless they turn to GM technology.

More awareness of the technology could also reinforce wariness, said Jean Halloran, head of food policy initiatives at Consumers Union.

"I think that if consumers become really educated," she said, "that's the point they'll end up at and say, 'Why should I mess around with this technology when it has no benefits to me?'"

"High Food Prices May Cut Opposition to Genetically Modified Food," Author Sam Cage, Reuters, 2008, Reuters. Used by permission.

Source F

"Benefits Outweigh Risks from Genetically Modified Plants." *UQ News*. University of Queensland, Australia. January 23, 2008.

The following is excerpted from an article on the website of an Australian university.

Australian states should not ban commercial production of genetically modified (GM) plants and food as the risks are alarmist and exaggerated, according to a new study.

The UQ PhD study found the benefits of GM plants and food outweighed the risks, finding no compelling evidence of harm to humans from GM plants.

GM plants have been trialled in most states with South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia the only states to ban GM plants. South Australia and Tasmania are reviewing their moratoriums.

The study author, ethicist Dr Lucy Carter, spent three-and-a-half years examining arguments and evidence for and against the development and use of GM plants and food in Australia and in the developing world.

Dr Carter said there was no evidence to justify continuing moratoriums on commercial GM planting so long as thorough risk assessments were done.

Opponents say GM products are unnatural, potentially harmful to humans and capable of environmental injury and creating 'superweeds'.

She said the risks of GM plants transferring allergenic proteins to novel foods or creating superweeds were very low.

"If you take a GM plant and a conventional plant, you can't easily create a hybrid that is both strong enough to withstand natural environmental conditions as well as survive all eradication attempts unless you're in the lab," Dr Carter said.

"It's just too difficult."

Asked if it was too early to tell if GM plants were safe, Dr Carter said research that included risk assessments showed no reason for alarm.

Food products that contain more than one percent of a GM ingredient must be labelled and most people have already eaten GM food in some supermarket junk food.

"I think the risks and benefits are overstated by both sides of the debate," she said.

"Opponents tend to inflate the risks while proponents at times overstate the benefits."

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Source G

Manda, Olga. "Controversy Rages Over 'GM' Food Aid." *Africa Renewal* 16.4 (2003). February 21, 2012.

The following is excerpted from an article in "Africa Renewal," an online magazine published by the United Nations.

Southern African governments find themselves in a dilemma: they have to choose between letting their citizens starve to death or giving them genetically modified food aid that many believe may be harmful to health.

That was the predicament facing the region's cash-strapped governments when the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) provided them with thousands of tonnes of emergency food aid to help combat severe famine conditions. Some of the food came from donor countries, such as the US, which produce large quantities of genetically modified (GM) maize and other grains.

Several governments in the region objected to the GM grain, especially Zambia and Zimbabwe, the countries hardest hit by the drought. Citing health and environmental concerns, Zimbabwe blocked the GM food aid from entering the country. In Zambia, where some GM grain had already arrived, the government placed it under lock and key, banned its distribution and then blocked another 40,000 tonnes that were in the pipeline.

Scientific uncertainty

In Zambia, the decision came after months of intense debate. Environmental and other "watchdog" groups critical of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have been influential, and through networking, forums and protests applied pressure on the government. Local civic groups and scientists conducted a study tour of the US, India, South Africa and Europe to investigate views about genetic modification. "We established from all the countries we visited that GMOs are a health hazard," the team maintained after returning to Lusaka.

Many Zambians believe that GMOs cause resistance to antibiotics, thereby cutting immunity to diseases, and that they may lead to the emergence of new food toxins or to allergies in people with poor health. "For Zambia, most people in outlying areas are of an average health status," argued Dr Mwananyanda Mbikusita-Lewanika, a Zambian scientist, "and if consumption [of GM grains] is high, then toxicity would equally increase."…

'Zambians are not guinea pigs'

Although nearly 30 per cent of Zambia's 10.2 million people are facing starvation, the government of President Levy Mwanawasa has bowed to the concerns about the potential hazards of genetic modification and has flatly refused to accept GM grain. President Mwanawasa has repeatedly said that until he has sufficient and credible information to the contrary, he will not risk feeding Zambians a "poison" that could have long-term effects.

The government has said it will follow the "cautionary principle," which states that in the face of scientific uncertainty, a country should not take action that might adversely affect human and animal health or harm the environment.

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Noting that it currently has no technological capacity to handle GMOs, the administration nevertheless announced that it will set up a task force to study the issue more closely.

In the meantime, President Mwanawasa has asked Zambians to be "patient" while the government does all it can to secure non-GM food. "I will not allow Zambians to be turned into guinea pigs no matter the levels of hunger in the country."

Africa Renewal, United Nations

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Analysis Prompt

(Suggested time—40 minutes.)

The letter below was written by Samuel Johnson in response to a woman who had asked him to obtain the archbishop of Canterbury's patronage to have her son sent to the university. Read the letter carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze how Johnson crafts his denial of the woman's request.

MADAM,

I hope you will believe that my delay in answering your letter could proceed only from my unwillingness to destroy any hope that you had formed. Hope is itself a species of happiness, and, perhaps, the chief happiness which this world affords: but, like all other pleasures immoderately enjoyed, the excesses of hope must be expiated by pain; and expectations improperly indulged, must end in disappointment. If it be asked, what is the improper expectation which it is dangerous to indulge, experience will quickly answer, that it is such expectation as is dictated not by reason, but by desire; expectation raised, not by the common occurrences of life, but by the wants of the expectant; an expectation that requires the common course of things to be changed, and the general rules of action to be broken.

When you made your request to me, you should have considered, Madam, what you were asking. You ask me to solicit a great man, to whom I never spoke, for a young person whom I had never seen, upon a supposition which I had no means of knowing to be true. There is no reason why, amongst all the great, I should chuse[1] to supplicate the Archbishop, nor why, among all the possible objects of his bounty, the Archbishop should chuse your son. I know, Madam, how unwillingly conviction is admitted, when interest opposes it; but surely, Madam, you must allow, that there is no reason why that should be done by me, which every other man may do with equal reason, and which, indeed, no man can do properly, without some very particular relation both to the Archbishop and to you. If I could help you in this exigence by any proper means, it would give me pleasure: but this proposal is so very remote from usual methods, that I cannot comply with it, but at the risk of such answer and suspicions as I believe you do not wish me to undergo.

I have seen your son this morning; he seems a pretty

1 choose

youth, and will, perhaps, find some better friend than I can procure him; but though he should at last miss the University, he may still be wise, useful, and happy.

(June 8, 1762)

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Argument Prompt

(Suggested time—40 minutes.)

For centuries, prominent thinkers have pondered the relationship between ownership and the development of self (identity), ultimately asking the question, "What does it mean to own something?"

Plato argues that owning objects is detrimental to a person's character. Aristotle claims that ownership of tangible goods helps to develop moral character. Twentieth-century philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre proposes that ownership extends beyond objects to include intangible things as well. In Sartre's view, becoming proficient in some skill and knowing something thoroughly means that we "own" it.

Think about the differing views of ownership. Then write an essay in which you explain your position on the relationship between ownership and sense of self. Use appropriate evidence from your reading, experience, or observations to support your argument.

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AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE

About the Advanced Placement Program® (AP®)

The Advanced Placement Program® enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies — with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both — while still in high school. AP Exams are given each year in May. Students who earn a qualifying score on an AP Exam are typically eligible to receive college credit and/or placement into advanced courses in college. Every aspect of AP course and exam development is the result of collaboration between AP teachers and college faculty. They work together to develop AP courses and exams, set scoring standards, and score the exams. College faculty review every AP teacher's course syllabus.

AP English Program

The AP Program offers two courses in English studies, each designed to provide high school students the opportunity to engage with a typical introductory-level college English curriculum.

The AP English Language and Composition course focuses on the development and revision of evidence-based analytic and argumentative writing and the rhetorical analysis of nonfiction texts.

The AP English Literature and Composition course focuses on reading, analyzing, and writing about imaginative literature (fiction, poetry, drama) from various periods.

There is no prescribed sequence of study, and a school may offer one or both courses.

AP English Language and Composition Course Overview

The AP English Language and Composition course aligns to an introductory college-level rhetoric and writing curriculum, which requires students to develop evidence-based analytic and argumentative essays that proceed through several stages or drafts. Students evaluate, synthesize, and cite research to support their arguments. Throughout the course, students develop a personal style by making appropriate grammatical choices. Additionally, students read and analyze the rhetorical elements and their effects in non-fiction texts, including graphic images as forms of text, from many disciplines and historical periods.

PREREQUISITE

There are no prerequisite courses for AP English Language and Composition.

Students should be able to read and comprehend college-level texts and apply the conventions of Standard Written English in their writing.

AP English Language and Composition Course Content

The AP English Language and Composition course is designed to help students become skilled readers and writers through engagement with the following course requirements:

- Composing in several forms (e.g., narrative, expository, analytical, and argumentative essays) about a variety of subjects
- Writing that proceeds through several stages or drafts, with revision aided by teacher and peers
- Writing informally (e.g., imitation exercises, journal keeping, collaborative writing), which helps students become aware of themselves as writers and the techniques employed by other writers
- Writing expository, analytical, and argumentative compositions based on readings representing a variety of prose styles and genres
- Reading nonfiction (e.g., essays, journalism, science writing, autobiographies, criticism) selected to give students opportunities to identify and explain an author's use of rhetorical strategies and techniques[1]
- Analyzing graphics and visual images both in relation to written texts and as alternative forms of text themselves
- Developing research skills and the ability to evaluate, use, and cite primary and secondary sources
- Conducting research and writing argument papers in which students present an argument of their own that includes the analysis and synthesis of ideas from an array of sources
- Citing sources using a recognized editorial style (e.g., Modern Language Association, The Chicago Manual of Style)
- Revising their work to develop
    - A wide-ranging vocabulary used appropriately and effectively;
    - A variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordination and coordination;
    - Logical organization, enhanced by techniques such as repetition, transitions, and emphasis;
    - A balance of generalization and specific, illustrative detail; and
    - An effective use of rhetoric, including tone, voice, diction, and sentence structure.

1. The College Board does not mandate any particular authors or reading list, but representative authors are cited in the AP English Language Course Description.

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AP English Language and Composition Exam Structure

AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION EXAM: 3 HOURS 15 MINUTES

Assessment Overview

The AP English Language and Composition Exam employs multiple-choice questions to test students' skills in rhetorical analysis of prose passages. Students are also required to write three essays that demonstrate their skill in rhetorical analysis, argumentation, and synthesis of information from multiple sources to support the student's own argument. Although the skills tested on the exam remain essentially the same from year to year, there may be some variation in format of the free-response (essay) questions.

Format of Assessment

Section I: Multiple Choice: 52–55 Questions | 60 Minutes | 45% of Exam Score

- Includes excerpts from several non-fiction texts
- Each excerpt is accompanied by several multiple-choice questions

Section II: Free Response: 3 Prompts | 2 Hours 15 Minutes | 55% of Exam Score

- 15 minutes for reading source materials for the synthesis prompt (in the free-response section)
- 120 minutes to write essay responses to the three free-response prompts

Prompt Types

Synthesis: Students read several texts about a topic and create an argument that synthesizes at least three of the sources to support their thesis.

Rhetorical Analysis: Students read a non-fiction text and analyze how the writer's language choices contribute to his or her purpose and intended meaning for the text.

Argument: Students create an evidence-based argument that responds to a given topic.

AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION SAMPLE EXAM QUESTIONS

Sample Multiple-Choice Question

Students are given a passage of writing and asked to respond to a set of prompts and questions based on the passage. Below is one example.

The primary rhetorical function of lines 14–22 is to

(A) provide support for a thesis supplied in lines 1–2

(B) provide evidence to contrast with that supplied in the first paragraph

(C) present a thesis that will be challenged in paragraph three

(D) introduce a series of generalizations that are supported in the last two paragraphs

(E) anticipate objections raised by the ideas presented in lines 12–14

Sample Free-Response Question

The following passage is from *Rights of Man*, a book written by the pamphleteer Thomas Paine in 1791. Born in England, Paine was an intellectual, a revolutionary, and a supporter of American independence from England. Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay that examines the extent to which Paine's characterization of America holds true today. Use appropriate evidence to support your argument.

> If there is a country in the world, where concord, according to common calculation, would be least expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different nations, accustomed to different forms and habits of government, speaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worship, it would appear that the union of such a people was impracticable; but by the simple operation of constructing government on the principles of society and the rights of man, every difficulty retires, and all the parts are brought into cordial unison. There, the poor are not oppressed, the rich are not privileged.... Their taxes are few, because their government is just; and as there is nothing to render them wretched, there is nothing to engender riots and tumults.

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