

Evidence, Thesis, and Stylistic Choices

AP English Language ■ Unit 6

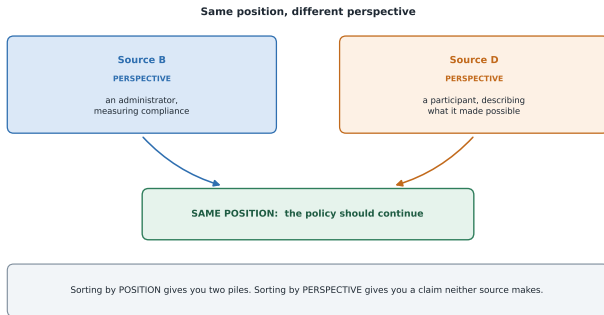
AP English Language



What we will cover

- 1 Identifying Claims and Evidence
- 2 Developing a Paragraph with Claim and Evidence
- 3 Identifying the Overarching Thesis
- 4 Writing a Thesis Statement
- 5 Word Choice, Comparisons, and Syntax
- 6 Using Words and Syntax for Tone and Style

Identifying Claims and Evidence



the distinction this unit turns on

Identifying Claims and Evidence

Unit 6 is the synthesis unit, and it contains the single sharpest distinction in the course.

- When **synthesising**, writers **draw on arguments from multiple sources**, strategically select the most relevant information, and integrate it into their own argument.
- A source **provides information** for an argument, and **some sources are more reliable or credible than others** 可靠性与可信度.
- **A position and a perspective are different.** Sources may hold the **same position** on a subject and yet each come from a **different perspective**.
- The strongest arguments **recognise and acknowledge the other positions** that exist.
- The degree to which a source considers other positions reflects the degree to which that source is **credible** – a test you can apply to any source on the exam.

Developing a Paragraph with Claim and Evidence

The position-and-perspective distinction is what makes synthesis possible. If you sort the sources only by position, you get two piles – for and against – and a paragraph per pile. If you sort them by **perspective**, you can say things like:

It uses two sources, is grounded in what each actually says, and produces a claim neither source makes.

Identifying the Overarching Thesis

A short but load-bearing point: **consideration and use of new evidence may require revision of the thesis statement and/or changes to the line of reasoning** 修正论点.

Reading a text, this means a writer's thesis may be *responsive* – shaped by the evidence rather than imposed on it.

Writing a Thesis Statement

Writing under time pressure, this is permission you should use. If, while drafting, you find the evidence does not support the thesis you began with, **change the thesis**, not the evidence. Examiners reward an argument that fits its evidence; there are no marks for having predicted your own conclusion.

A thesis written after the evidence is nearly always better than one written before it.

Word Choice, Comparisons, and Syntax

The third is the analytical gold. A tone shift is a visible event in a text: something changed at that point, and explaining what the writer wanted the reader to do differently after it is exactly the kind of answer that scores.

- A writer's **tone** 语调 is the writer's **attitude or feeling about a subject**, conveyed through word choice and writing style.
- Readers **infer** tone from word choice – especially from the **positive, negative, or otherwise charged** associations of the words chosen.
- A writer's **shifts in tone** 语调转变 from one part of a text to another may suggest **qualification, refinement, or a change in perspective**.

Using Words and Syntax for Tone and Style

In your own writing, tone should be **consistent and controlled**, and deliberately shifted only where the argument turns – for example when moving from stating your position to conceding part of an opposing one.

Exam tips

- **Position and perspective are different.** This one distinction lifts most synthesis essays out of the middle band.
- Sort sources by **perspective**, not by side. Sorting by side produces a paragraph per pile and no argument.
- Use the CED's **credibility test**: a source that ignores all other positions is weaker, and you may say so.
- If the evidence does not fit the thesis, **change the thesis**. There are no marks for consistency with your first idea.
- A **tone shift** is a visible event. Say what changed and what the reader was meant to do after it.
- Keep your own tone controlled. Shift it only where the argument genuinely turns.