

2025



AP[®] English Language and Composition

Scoring Guidelines

Set 1

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Synthesis Essay**6 points**

As nations and space agencies have sent spacecraft and satellites into space, human-created debris—or “space junk”—has accumulated in orbit around Earth. Space debris may range in size from small parts and flecks of paint to whole defunct satellites, but all of it poses a potential risk if it collides with a spacecraft. Many countries have agreed that the management of space debris is a priority because it poses a threat to space exploration and satellites. However, removing it is difficult and costly.

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the most important factors that space agencies and nations should consider when dealing with the problem of space debris.

Source A (O’Callaghan article)

Source B (graph from ESA)

Source C (Quell article)

Source D (Rossettini opinion article)

Source E (NOAA article)

Source F (chart from Mosher and Kiersz)

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Select and use evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support your line of reasoning. Indicate clearly the sources used through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. Sources may be cited as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the description in parentheses.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: - There is no defensible thesis. - The intended thesis only restates the prompt. - The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. - There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Only restate the prompt. - Do not take a position, or the position is vague or must be inferred. - Equivocate or summarize other's arguments but not the student's (e.g., some people say it's good, some people say it's bad). - State an obvious fact rather than making a claim that requires a defense.	Responses that earn this point: Respond to the prompt by developing a position on the most important factors that space agencies and nations should consider when dealing with the problem of space debris, rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. Clearly take a position rather than just stating there are pros/cons.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <i>"There are several factors space agencies need to consider when they are thinking about how to remove space debris."</i> Address the topic of the prompt but do not take a position <i>"Space debris is accumulating around the planet because of defunct satellites or debris left behind by humans on space missions."</i> Address the topic of the prompt but state an obvious fact as a claim <i>"The amount of space junk orbiting Earth has greatly increased in recent years."</i>	Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible position that responds to the prompt <i>"Cost is the most important factor space agencies and nations need to keep in mind when deciding what to do about the problem of space junk."</i> <i>"There are multiple problems related to space debris. While removing existing space debris is important, the most important factor is preventing more debris from accumulating."</i> <i>"Space agencies need to figure out an effective way to deal with space debris, and they need to make sure that the plan is implemented in a way where the countries and people responsible for putting the debris in space are the ones who pay the costs."</i>
Additional Notes: - The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. - The thesis may be anywhere within the response. - For a thesis to be defensible, the sources must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. - The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. - A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.		

Reporting	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or references fewer than two of the provided sources.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence from or references at least two of the provided sources. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides evidence from or references at least three of the provided sources. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. - May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.	Typical responses that earn 1 point: Tend to focus on summary or description of sources rather than specific details.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. - May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument. - May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. - Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument. - Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. - Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument. - Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.
Additional Notes: Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (<i>“In a world where ...”</i> OR <i>“Since the beginning of time ...”</i>). - Only hint at or suggest other arguments (<i>“While some may argue that ...”</i> OR <i>“Some people say ...”</i>). - Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the argument.	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: - Crafting a nuanced argument by consistently identifying and exploring complexities or tensions across the sources. - Articulating the implications or limitations of an argument (either the student’s argument or arguments conveyed in the sources) by situating it within a broader context. - Making effective rhetorical choices that consistently strengthen the force and impact of the student’s argument throughout the response. - Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Notes: This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	

Rhetorical Analysis**6 points**

The following is a passage from the introduction to David Treuer’s 2012 nonfiction book *Rez Life: An Indian’s Journey Through Reservation Life*. Treuer is a member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, a tribal nation in Minnesota. In *Rez Life*, Treuer draws on research and personal experience to explore the history of reservations and the issues that affect Native Americans who live on them today. A reservation is an area of land governed by a tribal nation in what is now the United States. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Treuer makes to develop his argument about the contributions that Native Americans and their communities have made to the United States.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: - There is no defensible thesis. - The intended thesis only restates the prompt. - The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. - There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Only restate the prompt. - Fail to address the rhetorical choices the writer of the passage makes. - Describe or repeat the passage rather than making a claim that requires a defense. Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <i>“In his book Rez Life: An Indian’s Journey Through Reservation Life, Treuer uses a variety of rhetorical strategies to make his point about the contributions of Native Americans.”</i> Make a claim but do not address the writer’s rhetorical choices <i>“Treuer’s main point is that although most people are not familiar with Indian reservations or Native Americans’ contributions to American society, Native Americans have played a key role in the nation’s history.”</i> Repeat provided information from the passage <i>“Indian reservations can be found all over the United States, and Native Americans have participated in every war America has been involved in.”</i>	Responses that earn this point: - Respond to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt <u>and</u> clearly articulate a defensible thesis about the rhetorical choices Treuer makes to develop his argument about the contributions that Native Americans and their communities have made to the United States. Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices <i>“In this passage, Treuer uses interesting facts about Native Americans to show that they have made significant contributions.”</i> <i>“Using rhetorical strategies such as contrast and a humorous yet slightly ironic tone, Treuer calls attention to the fact that Native Americans and Indian reservations are ‘as American as apple pie.’”</i> <i>“In the introduction to his 2012 book, Rez Life: An Indian’s Journey Through Reservation Life, Treuer describes the history of Native Americans and then focuses on their contributions. By combining historical examples with engaging contemporary examples, he shows they are an integral part of US society and history.”</i>
	Additional Notes: - The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. - The thesis may be anywhere within the response. - For a thesis to be defensible, the passage must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. - The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn’t do so to earn the thesis point. - A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.	

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how at least one rhetorical choice in the passage contributes to the writer’s argument, purpose, or message.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how multiple rhetorical choices in the passage contribute to the writer’s argument, purpose, or message.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. - May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.	Typical responses that earn 1 point: - Tend to focus on summary or description of a passage rather than specific details or techniques. - Mention rhetorical choices with little or no explanation.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. - May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument. - May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. - Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an argument. - Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. - Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an argument. - Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. - Explain how the writer’s use of rhetorical choices contributes to the student’s interpretation of the passage.
Additional Notes: - Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. - To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same rhetorical choice if each instance further contributes to the argument, purpose, or message of the passage.					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Attempt to contextualize the text, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>In a world where ...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time ...</i>”). - Only hint at or suggest other arguments (“<i>While some may argue that ...</i>” OR “<i>Some people say ...</i>”). - Examine individual rhetorical choices but do not examine the relationships among different choices throughout the text. - Oversimplify complexities in the text. - Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance their analysis.	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: - Explaining the significance or relevance of the writer’s rhetorical choices (given the rhetorical situation). - Explaining a purpose or function of the passage’s complexities or tensions. - Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
Additional Notes: This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.		

Argument Essay**6 points**

In a 2022 interview with *People* magazine promoting her program to empower young girls through sport, professional tennis player and mental health advocate Naomi Osaka said: “For me, the biggest lesson I’ve learned is to try to be present in each moment. It’s easy to lose sight of how far you’ve come, but I’ve been prioritizing trying to live in the moment and enjoy the journey.”

Write an essay that argues your position on the extent to which Osaka’s claim about embracing the present moment is valid.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Provide evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: - There is no defensible thesis. - The intended thesis only restates the prompt. - The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. - There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Only restate the prompt. - Do not take a position, or the position is vague or must be inferred. - State an obvious fact rather than making a claim that requires a defense.	Responses that earn this point: Respond to the prompt by taking a position on the extent to which Osaka’s claim about embracing the present moment is valid, rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. Clearly take a position rather than just stating that there are pros/cons.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Do not take a position <i>“Living in the moment means ‘being’ in the moment.”</i> Address the topic of the prompt but are not defensible—it is an obvious fact stated as a claim <i>“Life is a journey with many moments for someone to experience.”</i>	Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible position that responds to the prompt. <i>“It is more important that we make long-term plans, so we can reach our goals and so we can enjoy our achievements.”</i> <i>“Osaka is correct. If one doesn’t actively try to ‘live in the moment’ they might struggle to see how much they have grown.”</i> <i>“While living in the moment is good, if one focuses too much on the present, they will be unable to develop the traits and practice the skills needed for future success.”</i>
Additional Notes: - The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. - The thesis may be anywhere within the response. - The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn’t do so to earn the thesis point. - A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student's argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. - May be just opinion with no evidence or evidence that is irrelevant.	Typical responses that earn 1 point: Tend to focus on summary of evidence rather than specific details.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. - May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument. - May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. - Do not explain the connections or progression between the student's claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific details to build an argument. - Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. - Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific details to build an argument. - Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.
Additional Notes: Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.					

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	Responses that do not earn this point: - Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>In a world where ...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time ...</i>”). - Only hint at or suggest other arguments (“<i>While some may argue that ...</i>” OR “<i>Some people say ...</i>”). - Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the argument.	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: - Crafting a nuanced argument by consistently identifying and exploring complexities or tensions. - Articulating the implications or limitations of an argument (either the student’s argument or an argument related to the prompt) by situating it within a broader context. - Making effective rhetorical choices that consistently strengthen the force and impact of the student’s argument. - Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Notes: This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	

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Scoring Guidelines

Set 2

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Synthesis Essay**6 points**

Mapping software and Global Positioning System (GPS) devices are used regularly by travelers and commuters. Since these devices and apps are updated in real time with user-supplied information, they have become associated with a number of problems. While commuters attempt to avoid traffic on highways, they often create traffic on smaller, local roads that are less able to handle this new burden. Users also lose a sense of their geographical surroundings as they rely more on mapping software or GPS devices for navigation.

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the value, if any, of mapping software and devices.

Source A (Foderaro article)

Source B (National Research Council book)

Source C (graph from He)

Source D (Grabar article)

Source E (chart from BuildFire)

Source F (Paulas article)

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Select and use evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support your line of reasoning. Indicate clearly the sources used through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. Sources may be cited as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the description in parentheses.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: - There is no defensible thesis. - The intended thesis only restates the prompt. - The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. - There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Only restate the prompt. - Do not take a position, or the position is vague or must be inferred. - Equivocate or summarize other's arguments but not the student's (e.g., some people say it's good, some people say it's bad). - State an obvious fact rather than making a claim that requires a defense.	Responses that earn this point: Respond to the prompt by developing a position on the value, if any, of mapping software and devices, rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. Clearly take a position rather than just stating there are pros/cons.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt "Many people use GPS to get around because information can be updated by users to provide real-time traffic updates." Address the topic of the prompt but do not take a position "There are some advantages and some disadvantages to using GPS." Address the topic of the prompt but state an obvious fact as a claim "If you rely on GPS to get everywhere, you will be able to see many different neighborhoods as you navigate to your destination."	Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible position that responds to the prompt "GPS is valuable because it helps people get where they need to go as efficiently as possible." "Mapping apps can be a valuable tool to help people keep from getting lost. It can also make their lives easier but only if people use them when absolutely needed." "Although GPS may seem like a good thing, the harm that it does to local roads and the way it affects your understanding of your surroundings mean that its disadvantages ultimately outweigh its value."
Additional Notes: - The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. - The thesis may be anywhere within the response. - For a thesis to be defensible, the sources must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. - The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. - A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or references fewer than two of the provided sources.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence from or references at least two of the provided sources. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides evidence from or references at least three of the provided sources. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. - May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.	Typical responses that earn 1 point: Tend to focus on summary or description of sources rather than specific details.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. - May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument. - May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. - Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument. - Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. - Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument. - Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.
Additional Note: Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.					

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	Responses that do not earn this point: - Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (<i>“In a world where ...”</i> OR <i>“Since the beginning of time ...”</i>). - Only hint at or suggest other arguments (<i>“While some may argue that ...”</i> OR <i>“Some people say ...”</i>). - Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the argument.	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: - Crafting a nuanced argument by consistently identifying and exploring complexities or tensions across the sources. - Articulating the implications or limitations of an argument (either the student’s argument or arguments conveyed in the sources) by situating it within a broader context. - Making effective rhetorical choices that consistently strengthen the force and impact of the student’s argument throughout the response. - Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Note: This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	

Rhetorical Analysis**6 points**

Raquel Vasquez Gilliland is a Mexican American poet, novelist, and painter whose works focus on myths, folklore, motherhood, and plants. In 2023 she published an opinion article in *The New York Times* titled “Go Outside, Sink Your Feet Into the Dirt and Engage With the World.” The following is an excerpt from that opinion article. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Vasquez Gilliland makes to develop her argument about the value of engaging with nature.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: - There is no defensible thesis. - The intended thesis only restates the prompt. - The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. - There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Only restate the prompt. - Fail to address the rhetorical choices the writer of the passage makes. - Describe or repeat the passage rather than making a claim that requires a defense. Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <i>“In her op-ed ‘Go Outside, Sink Your Feet Into the Dirt and Engage With the World,’ Vasquez Gilliland shows that there is value in connecting to the land.”</i> Make a claim but do not address the writer’s rhetorical choices <i>“In the passage, Vasquez Gilliland says she gets inspiration from nature to help her with her writing.”</i> Repeat provided information from the passage <i>“Vasquez Gilliland became interested in nature at a young age when she first saw a dove land on her grandmother’s hand after she had called out to it.”</i>	Responses that earn this point: - Respond to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt <u>and</u> clearly articulate a defensible thesis about the rhetorical choices Vasquez Gilliland makes to develop her argument about the value of engaging with nature. Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices <i>“Raquel Vasquez Gilliland argues for the value of engaging with nature by relying extensively on imagery.”</i> <i>“Vasquez Gilliland uses many moving personal anecdotes to show the benefits of spending time with nature. This is especially true today when we are often isolated and obsessed with social media.”</i> <i>“By relating to the audience and describing her relationship with nature, Vasquez Gilliland suggests that the land has the power to ground people and help them solve sometimes practical, sometimes philosophical problems.”</i>
	Additional Notes: - The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. - The thesis may be anywhere within the response. - For a thesis to be defensible, the passage must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. - The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn’t do so to earn the thesis point. - A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.	

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student's argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student's argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how at least one rhetorical choice in the passage contributes to the writer's argument, purpose, or message.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how multiple rhetorical choices in the passage contribute to the writer's argument, purpose, or message.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. - May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.	Typical responses that earn 1 point: - Tend to focus on summary or description of a passage rather than specific details or techniques. - Mention rhetorical choices with little or no explanation.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. - May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument. - May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. - Do not explain the connections or progression between the student's claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an argument. - Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. - Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an argument. - Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. - Explain how the writer's use of rhetorical choices contributes to the student's interpretation of the passage.
Additional Notes: - Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. - To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same rhetorical choice if each instance further contributes to the argument, purpose, or message of the passage.					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Attempt to contextualize the text, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (<i>“In a world where ...”</i> OR <i>“Since the beginning of time ...”</i>). - Only hint at or suggest other arguments (<i>“While some may argue that ...”</i> OR <i>“Some people say ...”</i>). - Examine individual rhetorical choices but do not examine the relationships among different choices throughout the text. - Oversimplify complexities in the text. - Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance their analysis.	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: - Explaining the significance or relevance of the writer’s rhetorical choices (given the rhetorical situation). - Explaining a purpose or function of the passage’s complexities or tensions. - Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Note: This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	

Argument Essay**6 points**

Amanda Gorman is the first National Youth Poet Laureate of the United States, an honor given to a young person for exceptional artistic expression, civic engagement, and social impact. In a 2021 interview in *Time* magazine, when asked how to maintain optimism¹ in challenging times, Gorman stated: “Optimism shouldn’t be seen as opposed to pessimism,² but in conversation with it. Your optimism will never be as powerful as it is in that exact moment when you want to give it up.”

Write an essay that argues your position on the extent to which Gorman’s claim about the relationship between optimism and pessimism is valid.

¹a tendency to view things in a positive light

²a tendency to view things in a negative light

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Provide evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: - There is no defensible thesis. - The intended thesis only restates the prompt. - The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. - There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Only restate the prompt. - Do not take a position, or the position is vague or must be inferred. - State an obvious fact rather than making a claim that requires a defense. Examples that do not earn this point: Do not take a position <i>“Optimism is when you view things positively.”</i> Address the topic of the prompt but are not defensible—it is an obvious fact stated as a claim <i>“There are both optimists and pessimists in this world.”</i>	Responses that earn this point: Respond to the prompt by taking a position on the extent to which Gorman’s claim about the relationship between optimism and pessimism is valid, rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. Clearly take a position rather than just stating that there are pros/cons. Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible position that responds to the prompt. <i>“Gorman’s claim about optimism and pessimism is valid.”</i> <i>“While Gorman has a good point about the power of optimism in the face of extreme struggle, pessimism can be an equally powerful and overwhelming force.”</i> <i>“Unwavering optimism is most powerful when the dialogue with pessimism becomes contentious. It is these moments that allow a strength of character to emerge.”</i>
Additional Notes: - The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. - The thesis may be anywhere within the response. - The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn’t do so to earn the thesis point. - A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student's argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. - May be just opinion with no evidence or evidence that is irrelevant.	Typical responses that earn 1 point: Tend to focus on summary of evidence rather than specific details.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. - May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument. - May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. - Do not explain the connections or progression between the student's claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific details to build an argument. - Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. - Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific details to build an argument. - Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.
Additional Note: Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>In a world where ...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time ...</i>”). - Only hint at or suggest other arguments (“<i>While some may argue that ...</i>” OR “<i>Some people say ...</i>”). - Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the argument.	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: - Crafting a nuanced argument by consistently identifying and exploring complexities or tensions. - Articulating the implications or limitations of an argument (either the student’s argument or an argument related to the prompt) by situating it within a broader context. - Making effective rhetorical choices that consistently strengthen the force and impact of the student’s argument. - Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Note: This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	

AP[®] English Language and Composition

Scoring Guidelines

Set 1

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¹ AP Central is the official online home for the AP Program: apcentral.collegeboard.org.

Synthesis Essay**6 points**

Historic preservation laws are intended to protect buildings deemed to be of historic, cultural, or architectural value. The laws affect both government buildings and private property, putting constraints on how and to what extent the structures can be altered, renovated, or replaced. Proponents of these laws claim they are necessary for the preservation of history and culture and the architectural integrity of a neighborhood. Opponents of the laws argue that such laws prevent progress and negatively impact real estate development, building renovation, and building design.

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the value, if any, of laws designed to preserve buildings deemed to be of historic importance.

Source A (National Parks Service Web site)

Source B (Merlino book)

Source C (Appelbaum opinion article)

Source D (Webb graph)

Source E (Martin article)

Source F (Rosen cartoon)

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Select and use evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support your line of reasoning. Indicate clearly the sources used through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. Sources may be cited as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the description in parentheses.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: - There is no defensible thesis. - The intended thesis only restates the prompt. - The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. - There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Only restate the prompt. - Do not take a position, or the position is vague or must be inferred. - Equivocate or summarize other's arguments but not the student's (e.g., some people say it's good, some people say it's bad). - State an obvious fact rather than making a claim that requires a defense.	Responses that earn this point: Respond to the prompt by developing a position on the value, if any, of laws designed to preserve buildings deemed to be of historic importance, rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. Clearly take a position rather than just stating there are pros/cons.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <i>"Historic preservation laws are laws designed to preserve buildings deemed to be of historic importance."</i> Address the topic of the prompt but do not take a position <i>"Historic preservation laws have been called controversial."</i> Address the topic of the prompt but state an obvious fact as a claim <i>"There are laws that protect historic buildings."</i>	Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible position that responds to the prompt <i>"Laws that protect buildings are necessary to save history."</i> <i>"Laws designed to protect historical buildings are essential to preserve both culture and architecture."</i> <i>"While laws designed to protect historical buildings may help preserve cultural history as well as neighborhood integrity, they should rarely exist as they prevent building owners from possible renovations and sale."</i>
Additional Notes: - The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. - The thesis may be anywhere within the response. - For a thesis to be defensible, the sources must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. - The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. - A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or references fewer than two of the provided sources.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence from or references at least two of the provided sources. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides evidence from or references at least three of the provided sources. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. - May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.	Typical responses that earn 1 point: Tend to focus on summary or description of sources rather than specific details.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. - May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument. - May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. - Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument. - Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. - Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument. - Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.
Additional Notes: Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”). - Only hint at or suggest other arguments (“<i>While some may argue that...</i>” OR “<i>Some people say...</i>”). - Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the argument.	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: - Crafting a nuanced argument by consistently identifying and exploring complexities or tensions across the sources. - Articulating the implications or limitations of an argument (either the student’s argument or arguments conveyed in the sources) by situating it within a broader context. - Making effective rhetorical choices that consistently strengthen the force and impact of the student’s argument throughout the response. - Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Notes: This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	

Rhetorical Analysis**6 points**

Reshma Saujani is an attorney, author, and activist who founded Girls Who Code, an organization that works to advance opportunities for girls and women to find careers in the technology sector. The following passage is excerpted from Saujani's contribution to *American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures*, a 2018 anthology of essays by prominent Americans with backgrounds in multiple cultures. The excerpt begins after Saujani discusses founding a multicultural student organization at her high school. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Saujani makes to convey her message about the nature of bravery.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that analyzes the writer's rhetorical choices.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: - There is no defensible thesis. - The intended thesis only restates the prompt. - The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. - There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Only restate the prompt. - Fail to address the rhetorical choices the writer of the passage makes. - Describe or repeat the passage rather than making a claim that requires a defense. Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <i>“Reshma Saujani, who founded the organization Girls Who Code, wrote about bravery in the anthology American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures.”</i> Make a claim but do not address the writer’s rhetorical choices <i>“In her essay, Saujani talks about her parents’ bravery after they immigrated to the United States.”</i> Repeat provided information from the passage <i>“Saujani’s parents chose to Americanize their names in order to assimilate into American culture, thereby paving the way for their daughter’s authenticity.”</i>	Responses that earn this point: - Respond to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt <u>and</u> clearly articulate a defensible thesis about the rhetorical choices Saujani makes to convey her message about the nature of bravery. Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices <i>“Reshma Saujani uses comparison and contrast, repetition, and evocative imagery to convey what bravery means to her.”</i> <i>“In her essay, Saujani repeats key words and sentence structures to highlight the link between her parents’ choices and those she has made in her career as a politician and non-profit leader.”</i> <i>“In Reshma’s passage she conveys the message that it is better to be brave and take chances even if you fail, so you can stand apart from the crowd and make a change instead of blending in. Saujani is able to convey this message by first describing a time where she was brave but suffered failures and secondly demonstrating how the failures did not set her back from achieving great things.”</i>
	Additional Notes: - The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. - The thesis may be anywhere within the response. - For a thesis to be defensible, the passage must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. - The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn’t do so to earn the thesis point. - A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.	

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
	0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student's argument.	EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student's argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how at least one rhetorical choice in the passage contributes to the writer's argument, purpose, or message.	EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how multiple rhetorical choices in the passage contribute to the writer's argument, purpose, or message.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. - May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.	Typical responses that earn 1 point: - Tend to focus on summary or description of a passage rather than specific details or techniques. - Mention rhetorical choices with little or no explanation.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. - May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument. - May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. - Do not explain the connections or progression between the student's claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an argument. - Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. - Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an argument. - Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. - Explain how the writer's use of rhetorical choices contributes to the student's interpretation of the passage.
Additional Notes: - Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. - To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same rhetorical choice if each instance further contributes to the argument, purpose, or message of the passage.					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Attempt to contextualize the text, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (<i>“In a world where...”</i> OR <i>“Since the beginning of time...”</i>). - Only hint at or suggest other arguments (<i>“While some may argue that...”</i> OR <i>“Some people say...”</i>). - Examine individual rhetorical choices but do not examine the relationships among different choices throughout the text. - Oversimplify complexities in the text. - Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance their analysis.	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: - Explaining the significance or relevance of the writer’s rhetorical choices (given the rhetorical situation). - Explaining a purpose or function of the passage’s complexities or tensions. - Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Notes: This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	

Argument Essay

6 points

In a 2013 *New York Times* article on the practice of taking selfies, writer, editor, and podcast host J Wortham wrote: “Rather than dismissing the trend as a side effect of digital culture or a sad form of exhibitionism,¹ maybe we’re better off seeing selfies for what they are at their best—a kind of visual diary, a way to mark our short existence and hold it up to others as proof that we were here.”

Write an essay that argues your position on the extent to which Wortham’s claim about the value of documenting one’s life with selfies is valid.

¹ behavior that is meant to attract attention to oneself

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Provide evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: - There is no defensible thesis. - The intended thesis only restates the prompt. - The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. - There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Only restate the prompt. - Do not take a position, or the position is vague or must be inferred. - State an obvious fact rather than making a claim that requires a defense.	Responses that earn this point: Respond to the prompt by taking a position on the extent to which Wortham’s claim about the value of documenting one’s life with selfies is valid, rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. Clearly take a position rather than just stating that there are pros/cons.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Do not take a position <i>“In a New York Times article, J Wortham defends the practice of taking selfies.”</i> Address the topic of the prompt but are not defensible—it is an obvious fact stated as a claim <i>“Taking and posting selfies online is one of the most widespread phenomena of digital culture, but many people see this practice as a form of exhibitionism.”</i>	Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible position that responds to the prompt. <i>“I agree that taking selfies does not necessarily mean that a person is merely seeking attention; selfies are a form of self-expression and communication.”</i> <i>“Wortham’s claim is partly true. While a quick look at any social media proves that many post selfies merely to show themselves off, such pictures can also help us capture and share memorable experiences.”</i> <i>“Wortham’s claim is valid; the person who takes a selfie in the twenty-first century is no more exhibitionist than the artist who painted a self-portrait in the nineteenth century.”</i>
Additional Notes: - The thesis <i>may</i> be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. - The thesis <i>may</i> be anywhere within the response. - The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn’t do so to earn the thesis point. - A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student's argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: - Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. - May be just opinion with no evidence or evidence that is irrelevant.	Typical responses that earn 1 point: Tend to focus on summary of evidence rather than specific details.	Typical responses that earn 2 points: - Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. - May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument. - May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. - Do not explain the connections or progression between the student's claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	Typical responses that earn 3 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific details to build an argument. - Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. - Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	Typical responses that earn 4 points: - Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. - Focus on the importance of specific details to build an argument. - Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.
Additional Notes: Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: - Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”). - Only hint at or suggest other arguments (“<i>While some may argue that...</i>” OR “<i>Some people say...</i>”). - Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the argument.	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: - Crafting a nuanced argument by consistently identifying and exploring complexities or tensions. - Articulating the implications or limitations of an argument (either the student’s argument or an argument related to the prompt) by situating it within a broader context. - Making effective rhetorical choices that consistently strengthen the force and impact of the student’s argument. - Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Notes: This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	