AP Lang & Comp Compendium Student \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Rhetorical Analysis**

**Rhetoric**: Greek for orator – principles governing art of writing effectively, eloquently, persuasively. The act of choosing the most effective means of convincing or persuading an audience. Also, the *choices* made by the author in order to influence the audience and convey particular effects.

**Rhetorical Analysis** -- The examination of texts to determine how the author shapes the content to achieve a purpose for a given audience. In other words, fining what the writer wants the reader to understand by analyzing his or her language usage, structure, and literary and rhetorical techniques.

**Style –** The author’s manner of writing. The sum of choices an author makes in blending diction, syntax, figurative language, and other devices.

**Diction** – The author’s word choice is a powerful element of an author’s style and helps to develop the tone of a text. Words that develop the author’s attitude can have a **connotative** meaning, an implied or suggested meaning, or a **denotative** meaning, a literal dictionary definition.

**TERMS TO DISCUSS AND WRITE ABOUT DICTION:**

* **HIGH DICTION**: sophisticated or educated speaker who uses abstract nouns or complex figures of speech that demands a greater intellectual effort from the reader
* **LOW DICTION**: a simpler, less cultivated speaker who uses literal nouns and less grammatical complexity
* **SEMANTICS**: a study of language that focuses on the meaning and development of words
* **COLLOQUIAL**: informal language common in speech, but not in writing
* **COLLOQUIALISM**: an informal expression best suited in casual conversation
* **SLANG**: informal but common use of technically incorrect speech
* **DIALECT**: a variation on standard English that is used by members of a specific region or social class; includes accents
* **VERNACULAR**: the local language or dialect of common speech **written** in local language or dialect
* **CONNOTATION**: the feelings associated with a word.
* **DENOTATION**: the dictionary definition of a word.
* **BOMBAST**: inflated language that sounds impressive, but lacks substance.
* **POETIC DICTION**: sometimes called prose-poetry, this is the use of literary structures and devices that are more common in poetry than prose.

**Tone –** The tone is the author’s attitude toward his or her subject matter. When reading for tone, consider not only language, but also how the details, imagery, sentence structure and literary choices lend insight into the author’s purpose and attitude. Being able to determine tone is an essential skill needed to fully comprehend a text.

1. accusatory
2. apathetic
3. awe
4. bitter
5. cynical
6. condescending
7. callous
8. contemplative
9. critical
10. choleric
11. contemptuous
12. caustic
13. conventional
14. disdainful
15. didactic
16. derisive
17. earnest
18. erudite
19. fanciful
20. forthright
21. gloomy
22. haughty
23. Indignant
24. intimate
25. judgmental
26. jovial
27. lyrical
28. matter-of-fact
29. mocking
30. morose
31. malicious
32. objective
33. optimistic
34. obsequious
35. patronizing
36. pessimistic
37. quizzical
38. ribald
39. reverent
40. ridiculing
41. reflective
42. sarcastic
43. sardonic
44. satiric
45. sincere
46. solemn
47. sanguineous
48. whimsical

**Rhetorical Modes**

* **Illustration/Examples** -- Using particulars to get at principles. Explains by means of one or more specific *examples.*
* **Description** -- Word painting through the use of significant details. Intended to convey sensory perception (images).
* **Narration** --Storytelling; reviewing a sequence of events. More intent on representing what happened than explaining.
* **Definition** -- To determine what something is and what it is not. One paper can include definitions of many terms or ideas, but extended definition occurs when the goal of the paper is to define a larger concept.
* **Comparison/Contrast** -- The juxtaposition of two or more ideas/events/objects in hopes that by seeing one through the lens of the other, each may be explained and clarified, or alternatively one may prove better than the rest.
* **Cause/Effect** -- Asking why; to analyze by dividing into reasons and results.
* **Division/Classification** -- Unlike process analysis, this type of analysis can be applied to ideas, not just actions. Analysis occurs in two steps: 1. Divide the subject into parts and 2. Classify each into an existing category or into categories of the writer’s invention.
* **Argumentation** -- To persuade by appealing to reason, emotion, or both. Many other modes are useful tools in accomplishing the overall goal of argument.
* **Process Analysis** -- The separation of an action or series of actions into progressive parts. May be directive (tell the reader how to do something) or informative (explain how something works).

**Aristotelian Appeals: Logos, Ethos, and Pathos**

Whenever you read an argument you must ask yourself, “Is this persuasive? If so, why? And to whom?” There are many ways to appeal to an audience. Among them are appealing to *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*. These appeals are identifiable in almost all arguments.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **To Appeal to LOGOS**  **(logic, reasoning)** | **To Develop or Appeal to ETHOS**  **(character, ethics)** | **To Appeal to PATHOS**  **(emotion)** |
| : the argument itself; the reasoning the author uses; logical evidence | : how an author builds credibility & trustworthiness | : words or passages an author uses to activate emotions |
| **Types of LOGOS Appeals** | **Ways to Develop ETHOS** | **Types of PATHOS Appeals** |
| * Theories / scientific facts * Indicated meanings or reasons (because…) * Literal or historical analogies * Definitions * Factual data & statistics * Quotations * Citations from experts &   authorities   * Informed opinions * Examples (real life) * Personal anecdotes | * Author’s profession /background * Author’s publication * Appearing sincere, fair minded, knowledgeable * Conceding to opposition where appropriate * Morally / ethically likeable * Appropriate language for   audience and subject   * Appropriate vocabulary * Correct grammar * Professional format | * Emotionally loaded language * Vivid descriptions * Emotional examples * Anecdotes, testimonies, or narratives about emotional experiences or events * Figurative language * Emotional tone (humor, sarcasm,   disappointment, excitement, etc.) |
| **Effect on Audience** | **Effect on Audience** | **Effect on Audience** |
| Evokes a cognitive, rational  response. Readers get a sense of,  “Oh, that makes sense” or “Hmm,  that really doesn’t prove anything.” | Helps reader to see the author as  reliable, trustworthy, competent,  and credible. The reader might  respect the author or his/her views. | Evokes an emotional response. Persuasion by  emotion. (usually evoking fear, sympathy,  empathy, anger,) |
| **How to Talk About It** | **How to Talk About It** | **How to Talk About It** |
| The author appeals to logos by  defining relevant terms and then  supports his claim with numerous  citations from authorities.  The author’s use of statistics and  expert testimony are very  convincing logos appeals. | Through his use of scientific termi-  nology, the author builds his ethos  by demonstrating expertise.  The author’s ethos is effectively  developed as readers see that he is sympathetic to the struggles  minorities face. | When referencing 9/11, the author is appealing  to pathos. Here, he is eliciting both sadness and  anger from his readers.  The author’s description of the child with cancer  was a very persuasive appeal to pathos. |

**Rhetorical Devices**

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| --- | --- |
| Juxtaposition | a poetic and rhetorical device in which normally unassociated ideas, words, or phrases are placed next to one another, creating an effect of surprise and wit  The apparition of these faces in the crowd; /Petals on a wet, black bough. |
| Parallel structure (parallelism) | refers to a grammatical or structural similarity between sentences or parts of a sentence; it involves an arrangement of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs so that elements of equal importance are equally developed and similarly phrased  He was walking, running and jumping for joy. |
| Repetition | a device in which words, sounds, and ideas are used more than once to enhance rhythm and create emphasis  “…government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth” |
| Rhetorical question | a question that expects no answer; it is used to draw attention to a point and is generally stronger than a direct statement  If Mr. Ferchoff is always fair, as you have said, why did he refuse to listen to Mrs. Baldwin’s arguments? |
| Rhetorical fragment | a sentence fragment used deliberately for a persuasive purpose or to create a desired effect  Something to consider. |
| Anaphora | the repetition of the same word or group of words at the beginning of successive clauses  “We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing-grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills.” |
| Asyndeton | a deliberate omission of conjunctions in a series of related clauses  “I came, I saw, I conquered.” |
| Polysyndeton | the deliberate use of many conjunctions for special emphasis to highlight quantity or mass of detail or to create a flowing, continuous sentence pattern  The meal was huge – my mother fixed okra and green beans and ham and apple pie and green pickled tomatoes and ambrosia salad and all manner of fine country food – but no matter how I tried, I could not consume it to her satisfaction. |
| Invective | An emotionally violent, verbal denunciation or attack using strong, abusive language. |
| Chiasmus | a sentence strategy in which the arrangement of ideas in the second clause is a reversal of the first  “Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country” |
| Zeugma | the use of the verb that has two different meanings with objects that complement both meanings  He stole both her car and her heart that fateful night. |
| Synecdoche | A form of metonymy in which a part of an entity is used to refer to the whole.  Ex. “my wheels” instead of “my car.” |
| Metonymy | Greek meaning “changed label.” Figure of speech in which the name of one object is substituted for that of another closely associated with it.  Ex. "Good evening. Elvis Presley died today. He was 42. Apparently, it was a heart attack. He was found in his home in Memphis not breathing. His road manager tried to revive him -- he failed. **A hospital** tried to revive him -- it failed. His doctor pronounced him dead at three o'clock this afternoon. |
| Pun | A play on words that exploits the similarity in sound between two words with distinctly different meanings. |
| Litote | A form of understatement that involves making an affirmative point by denying its opposite.  That isn’t a bad idea.  You aren’t the worst writer in the world. |
| Oxymoron | Greek for “pointedly foolish.” Author groups two apparently contradictory terms to suggest a paradox.  Ex. “Blaring silence” or “Burning cold” |
| Paradox | Statement that appears self-contradictory or opposed to common sense but on closer inspection contains some degree of truth or validity. Enigma.  "The next time I have a daughter, I hope it's a boy." -- delivered by Paul Lynde (from the movie *Bye Bye Birdie* |
| Ambiguity | multiple meanings – intentional or not – of a work, phrase, sentence, or passage |
| Antithesis | The rhetorical opposition or contrast of words, clauses, or sentences, as in the following: JFK: “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” |
| Digression | A temporary departure from one subject to another more or less distantly related topic before the discussion of the first subject is resumed |
| Analogy | A comparison between two different things used to explain a more difficult concept.  Think of the nucleus of a cell as though it were the brain of the cell. It controls all of the actions of the cell. |

**Logical Fallacies**

Logical fallacies are ideas with flawed reasoning. While logical fallacies are present in many argumentative works, they can destroy the writer’s credibility and waken an argument. Here are the most common types of logical fallacies to note while reading or writing:

**Ad hominem –** A personal attack of an individual instead of the issue at hand.

*Don’t vote for Mary Williams – she used to hit the bottle pretty hard.* The goal is to discredit Williams as a person, without addressing her positions on issues or qualifications for office.

**Bandwagon –** Urges the audience to accept a position because a majority of people already do.

*As everyone knows, leaders are born, not made.* Where’s the evidence, and who is “everyone”?

**Begging the question** – Assumes the idea you are trying to prove as being true.

*Students could focus on courses in their major if all these useless English courses were canceled.* The writer labels English courses as useless without offering evidence. My best friend will vouch for me. You can trust her – I’ve known her forever.

**Cause/Effect or Post Hoc –** Assumes the effect is related to a cause because the events occur together.

*Lack of religion is associated with increased rates of depression. Therefore, lack of religion directly causes increased rates of depression.*

*There have been no terror attacks on American soil since the Department of Homeland Security was created. It must be doing its job!*

**Either/ Or Fallacy –** Implies that one of two negative outcomes is inevitable.

*Either we raise taxes or Social Security fund will go bankrupt.* Might there be other solutions to this problem – such as trimming government overspending?

**Equivocation –** Allows a key word or term in an argument to have different meanings during the course of the argument.

*All men are dreamers. No woman is a man. Therefore, no woman is a dreamer.*

**Generalization –** Bases an inference on too small a sample as the basis for a broader generalization.

*Playing sports makes people more aggressive. Look at all those fights at hockey and basketball games!* The writer suggests that the incidences which have happened indicate a general trend, and one that is true of all sports.

**Non sequitur –** Irrelevant reasons are offered to support a claim.

*I should be getting an A in writing class – I got an A in my anatomy class last winter.* There is, of course, no relationship between a grade earned in a math class last year and a writing course.

**Oversimplification** means giving easy answers to complicated questions, often accompanied by emotional appeals instead of logic.

*The more breaks an employee takes, the less productive she will be.* While this may be true for *some* employees, the writer is oversimplifying the matter by assuming that it is true for *all* employees. Furthermore, this argument assumes employees are less productive because they take breaks and ignores dozens of other factors that influence productivity.

**Red herring –** Introduces a topic unrelated to the claim.

*Governor Jones is the man to lead us – he’s won the Mr. Universe contest three times!* The uses the Governor’s success as a weight lifter to imply that he’ll be a strong leader – unfortunately, those are different kinds of “strong.”

**Slippery slope** arguments attempt to convince readers that if one thing is allowed, it will lead to horrible consequences.

*If we let the government ban assault rifles, the next thing you know they’ll be taking all of our guns away.* The writer implies that the position she opposes will lead to terrifying consequences.

**Straw man –** States an opponent’s argument in an exaggerated form, or attacking a weaker, irrelevant portion of an opponent’s argument.

*People who don’t support tuition hikes don’t care about our children’s education.* The writer assigns an unreasonable – and clearly wrong – motive to his opponents.

*My opponent says we need to limit our reliance on fossil fuels. If we can’t use natural gs, this state will grind to a stand-still.*

**Syntax**

**SYNTAX:** The term *syntax* refers not only to the structure of sentences, their types, their uses, their connection, and the variations authors choose, but also to smaller structures *within* sentences. Phrases (any group of words) and clauses (groups of words that contain a subject and a verb) are also syntactic elements that require a reader’s attention.

**Syntax** affects the pace of a piece.

* Short, clipped phrases, sentences and clauses tend to create a feeling of quickness, decisiveness, and speed to a piece. It is important to be aware of the content of a piece and look for connections to syntax. Pay attention to how pacing relates to the action and purpose of a particular piece.
* Long, convoluted sentences, especially with subordinate clauses at the beginning tend to slow the pace of a piece. Often they are connected to a contemplative section, a heavy or serious subject and the writer wants to emphasize it. Sometimes, however, they are placed in a piece for the purpose of demonstrating the ramblings of a character, the ludicrousness of an idea, or the ridiculousness of a situation. Watch for occasional satire or irony in these long sentences.

Describe the sentence structure by considering the following:

1. Examine the sentence length.  Does the sentence length fit the subject matter?  What variety of lengths is present? Why is the sentence length effective?

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| **Sentence lengths** |
| Staccato | Shorter than 4 words, often 1 or 2 |
| telegraphic | shorter than 5 words in length |
| short | approximately 5 words in length |
| medium | approximately 18 words in length |
| long | long and involved – 30 words or more length |

1. Examine sentence beginnings.  Is there a good variety or does a pattern emerge?
2. Examine the arrangement of ideas in a sentence.  Are they set out in a special way for a purpose?
3. Examine the arrangement of ideas in a paragraph.  Is there evidence of any pattern or structure?

* the beginning and ending of the passage
* a particular sequence that is important
* a noticeable chronology
* prominent literary techniques
* a focus or emphasis on any one part that makes it stand out

1. Examine the sentence patterns.  Some elements to consider are listed below:

**TYPES OF SENTENCES**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| declarative | | | The king is sick. | makes a statement | assertive |
| imperative | | | Cure the king! | gives a command | authoritative |
| interrogative | | | Is the king sick? | asks a question | questioning |
| exclamatory | | | The king is dead; long live the king! | makes an exclamation | emotional |
| **SENTENCE STRUCTURES** |
| simple sentence | contains one subject and one verb  has only one main, complete thought  *The singer bowed to her adoring audience.* | | | | |
| compound sentence | contains two independent clauses joined by a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or) or by a semicolon  has two or more main, complete thoughts. Two or more simple sentences are joined, usually with *or*, *but*, or *and*.  *The singer bowed to the audience, but she sang no encores.* | | | | |
| complex sentence | has one simple sentence and one or more clauses. These clauses are connected to the simple sentence with words like *because, while, when, if, as, although, since, unless, after, so, which, who,* and *that.*  contains an independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses  *After she bowed to the audience, the singer sang an encore.* | | | | |
| compound-complex sentence | a combination of the above  contains two or more principal clauses and one or more subordinate clauses  *The singer bowed while the audience applauded, but she sang no encores.* | | | | |

**SENTENCE ORDER**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Natural order of a sentence | involves constructing a sentence so the subject comes before the predicate  Oranges grow in California. |
| Inverted order of a sentence (sentence inversion) | involves constructing a sentence so the predicate comes before the subject (this is a device in which normal sentence patterns are reversed to create an emphatic or rhythmic effect)  In California grow oranges. |
| Split order of a sentence | divides the predicate into two parts with the subject coming in the middle  In California oranges grow. |

**Literary Terms to Remember**

**Figurative Languag**e– Writing or speech that is not intended to carry literal meaning and is usually meant to be imaginative and vivid

**Figure of Speech**.– A device used to produce figurative language. Many compare dissimilar things. Figures of speech include apostrophe, hyperbole, irony, metaphor, oxymoron, paradox, personification, simile, synecdoche, and understatement.

**Alliteration** -- The repetition of beginning consonant sounds. The repetition can reinforce meaning, unify ideas, supply a musical sound, and/or echo the sense of the passage.

**Onomatopoeia**– A figure of speech in which natural sounds are imitated in the sounds of words. Simple examples include such words as buzz, hiss, hum, crack, whinny, and murmur. If you note examples of onomatopoeia in an essay passage, note the effect.

**Allusion**– A direct or indirect reference to something which is presumably commonly known, such as an event, book, myth, place, or work of art. Allusions can be historical, literary, religious, topical, or mythical. There are many more possibilities, and a work may simultaneously use multiple layers of allusion.

**Apostrophe**– A figure of speech that directly addresses an absent or imaginary person or a personified abstraction, such as liberty or love. It is an address to someone or something that cannot answer. The effect may add familiarity or emotional intensity. William Wordsworth addresses John Milton as he writes, “Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour: / England hath need of thee.” Another example is Keats’ “Ode to a Grecian Urn,” in which Keats addresses the urn itself: “Thou still unravished bride of quietness.” Many apostrophes imply a personification of the object addressed.

**Personification**– A figure of speech in which the author presents or describes concepts, animals, or inanimate objects by endowing them with human attributes or emotions. Personification is used to make these abstractions, animals, or objects appear more vivid to the reader.

**Euphemism**– From the Greek for “good speech,” euphemisms are a more agreeable or less offensive substitute for a generally unpleasant word or concept. The euphemism may be used to adhere to standards of social or political correctness or to add humor or ironic understatement. Saying “earthly remains” rather than “corpse” is an example of euphemism.

**Double Entendre –** A double entendre is a literary device that can be defined as a phrase or a [figure of speech](https://literarydevices.net/figure-of-speech/) that might have multiple senses, interpretations, or two different meanings, or which might be understood in two different ways. Oxford Dictionary says that it “conveys an indelicate meaning.” The first meaning in double entendre is usually straightforward, while the second meaning is ironic, risqué, or inappropriate.

**Cliché –** From the French for “to stereotype,” a cliché is a phrase or opinion that is overused and betrays a lack of original thought.

**Metaphor**– A figure of speech using implied comparison of seemingly unlike things or the substitution of one for the other, suggesting some similarity. Metaphorical language makes writing more vivid, imaginative, thought provoking, and meaningful.

**Extended Metaphor** -- A metaphor developed at great length, occurring frequently in or throughout a work.

**Simile** – A comparison between two things using like or as.

**Hyperbole**– A figure of speech using deliberate exaggeration or overstatement. (The literal Greek meaning is “overshoot.”) Hyperboles often have a comic effect; however, a serious effect is also possible. Often, hyperbole produces irony. The opposite of hyperbole is understatement.

**Understatement** – the ironic minimalizing of fact, understatement presents something as less significant than it is. The effect can frequently be humorous and emphatic. Understatement is the opposite of hyperbole. Example: Jonathan Swift’s A Tale of a Tub: “Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse.”

**Imagery**– The sensory details or figurative language used to describe, arouse emotion, or represent abstractions. On a physical level, imagery uses terms related to the five senses: visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory. On a broader and deeper level, however, one image can represent more than one thing. For example, a rose may present visual imagery while also representing the color in a woman’s cheeks and/or symbolizing some degree of perfection. An author may use complex imagery while simultaneously employing other figures of speech, especially metaphor and simile. In addition, this term can apply to the total of all the images in a work. On the AP language exam, pay attention to how an author creates imagery and to the effect of this imagery.

**Symbol** -- – Generally, anything that represents itself and stands for something else. Usually a symbol is something concrete -- such as an object, action, character, or scene – that represents something more abstract. However, symbols and symbolism can be much more complex. One system classifies symbols into three categories: (1) natural symbols are objects and occurrences from nature to symbolize ideas commonly associated with them (dawn symbolizing hope or a new beginning, a rose symbolizing love, a tree symbolizing knowledge). (2) conventional symbols are those that have been invested with meaning by a group (religious symbols such as a cross or Star of David; national symbols, such as a flag or an eagle; or group symbols, such as a skull and crossbones for pirates or the scale of justice for lawyers). (3) literary symbols are sometimes also conventional in the sense that they are found in a variety of works and are more generally recognized. However, a work’s symbols may be more complicated, as is the jungle in Heart of Darkness. On the AP exam, try to determine what abstraction an object is a symbol for and to what extent it is successful in representing that abstraction.

**Irony**– The contrast between what is stated explicitly and what is really meant, or the difference between what appears to be and what is actually true. Irony is often used to create poignancy or humor. In general, there are three major types of irony used in language: (1) verbal irony – when the words literally state the opposite of the writer’s (or speaker’s) meaning (2) situational irony – when events turn out the opposite of what was expected; when what the characters and readers think ought to happen is not what does happen (3) dramatic irony – when facts or events are unknown to a character in a play or piece of fiction but known to the reader, audience, or other characters in the work.

**Sarcasm** -- From the Greek meaning “to tear flesh,” sarcasm involves bitter, caustic language that is meant to hurt or ridicule someone or something. It may use irony as a device, but not all ironic statements are sarcastic (that is, intended to ridicule). When well done, sarcasm can be witty and insightful; when poorly done, it is simply cruel.

**Point of view** – In literature, the perspective from which a story is told. There are two general divisions of point of view, and many subdivisions within those. (1) first person narrator tells the story with the first person pronoun, “I,” and is a character in the story. This narrator can be the protagonist, a secondary character, or an observing character. (2) third person narrator relates the events with the third person pronouns, “he,” “she,” and “it.” There are two main subdivisions to be aware of: a. third person omniscient, in which the narrator, with godlike knowledge, presents the thoughts and actions of any or all characters b. third person limited omniscient, in which the narrator presents the feelings and thoughts of only one character, presenting only the actions of all the remaining characters. In addition, be aware that the term point of view carries an additional meaning. When you are asked to analyze the author’s point of view, the appropriate point for you to address is the author’s attitude.

**AP English Essay Rubric**

Each of the three AP English Language and Composition essays equals one-third of the total essay score, and the entire essay (free-response) section equals 55% of the total exam score. Although each essay topic has its own scoring rubric (or guide) based on that topic's specific information, a general scoring guide for rhetorical analysis and argumentation essays follows. Notice that, on the whole, essay-scoring guides encompass four essential points; AP readers want your essay to be (1) on topic, (2) well organized, (3) thoroughly developed, and (4) correct in mechanics and sophisticated in style.

High Score (8-9)—90-97%

High-scoring essays thoroughly address all the tasks of the essay prompt in well-organized responses. The writing demonstrates stylistic sophistication and control over the elements of effective writing, although it is not necessarily faultless. Overall, high-scoring essays present thoroughly developed, intelligent ideas; sound and logical organization; strong evidence; and articulate diction. Essays earning a score of 9 are exemplary in every way.

* Rhetorical analysis essays demonstrate significant understanding of the passage, its intent, and the rhetorical strategies the author employs.
* Argument essays demonstrate the ability to construct a compelling argument, observing the author's underlying assumptions, (addressing multiple authors—three minimum—in the synthesis essay) and discussing many sides of the issues with appropriate evidence.

Medium-High Score (6-7)—84-87%

Medium-scoring essays complete the tasks of the essay topic well--they show some insight but usually with less precision and clarity than high-scoring essays. There may be lapses in correct diction or sophisticated language, but the essay is generally well-written.

* Rhetorical analysis essays demonstrate sufficient examination of the author's point and the rhetorical strategies he uses to enhance the central idea.
* Argument essays demonstrate the ability to construct an adequate argument, understand the author's point, and discuss its implications with suitable evidence. The synthesis argument will address at least three of the sources.

Medium Score (5)—80%

Essays that earn a medium score complete the essay task, but with no special insights; the analysis lacks depth and merely states the obvious. Frequently, the ideas are predictable and the paragraph development weak. Although the writing conveys the writer's ideas, they are presented simplistically and often contain lapses in diction or syntax.

* Rhetorical analysis essays demonstrate uneven or insufficient understanding of how rhetorical strategies create an author's point. Often, the writer merely lists what he or she observes in the passage instead of analyzing effect.
* Argument essays demonstrate the ability to present an argument, but they frequently provide limited and inadequate discussion, explanation, or evidence for the writer's ideas. The writer may not address enough of the sources in the synthesis essay. Oversimplification of the issue(s) minimizes the essay's effectiveness.

Medium-Low Score (3-4)—70-76%

These essays are weaker than the 5 score because the writer overlooks or perhaps misreads important ideas in the passage. The student may summarize the passage's ideas instead of analyzing them. Although the writer's ideas are generally understandable, the control of language is often immature.

* Rhetorical analysis essays demonstrate little discussion of rhetorical strategies or incorrect identification and/or analysis of those strategies.
* Argument essays demonstrate little ability to construct an argument. They may not clearly identify the author's point, may not present multiple authors' points of view in the synthesis essay, and may offer little evidence for the student's position.

Low Score (1-2)—50%

These essays demonstrate minimal understanding of the topic or the passage. Perhaps unfinished, these essays offer no analysis of the passage and little or no evidence for the student's ideas. Incorrect assertions may be made about the passage. Stylistically, these essays may show consistent grammatical problems, and sentence structure is usually simple and unimaginative.

* Rhetorical analysis essays demonstrate little ability to identify or analyze rhetorical strategies. Sometimes these essays misread the prompt and replace it with easier tasks, such as paraphrasing the passage or listing some strategies the author uses.
* Argument essays demonstrate little ability to understand the author's point (or multiple authors in the synthesis essay) and then construct an argument that analyzes it. Minimal or nonexistent evidence hurts the essay's effectiveness. Some students may substitute an easier task by presenting tangential or irrelevant ideas, evidence, or explanation.

Adapted from a variety of AP rubrics available online

**SOCRATIC SEMINAR RUBRIC**

**An A participant…**

* actively participates in the dialogue throughout seminar;
* makes insightful and meaningful comments in a sincere manner;
* always demonstrates active listening skills: eye contact, posture, and readiness in responding to questions;
* always acknowledges others’ comments;
* demonstrates preparedness: comes to the seminar with pre-activity completely filled out;
* refers to the text and directs everyone to the page, gives time for students to find, then reads;
* demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of the text.

**An B participant…**

* participates in the dialogue through most of the seminar;
* makes meaningful comments in a sincere manner;
* demonstrates active listening skills: eye contact, posture, and readiness in responding to questions;
* sometimes acknowledges others’ comments;
* demonstrates preparedness: comes to the seminar with pre-activity mostly filled out;
* demonstrates a good knowledge of the text;
* might make vague references to the text.

**An C participant…**

* participates irregularly in the dialogue;
* makes comments or answers only when asked, might volunteer a response;
* restates other’s comments;
* pays attention only when spoken to or not prepared when called on;
* does not acknowledges others’ comments;
* does demonstrates preparedness: pre-activity is half filled out;
* demonstrates a weak insight of the text.

**An F participant…**

* does not actively participate in the dialogue;
* never volunteers a response, only restates other’s comments;
* pays little attention to others;
* shows disinterest in the dialogue;
* does demonstrates preparedness: pre-activity is not done;
* demonstrates little insight into the text or repeats information from another source without credit.