

AP Language Exam for 2014 - Overall Tips (Optional Exam)

OVERALL ASK YOURSELF:

- 1) What college am I going to attend? What is their AP and IB English credit policy (check at <http://apps.collegeboard.com/search/index.jsp>)?
- 2) What did I get on the AP Literature exam last year? Should I retake it (May 8; 8-11AM - conflicts with IB Psych so check guidance for make-up exam date) if I didn't receive college credit? (ex: MAY BE A VERY GOOD IDEA IF GOING TO UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA because AP Lit earns different credit [4= AML2070 and ENL 2022] from AP Language and IB English [AP Lang 4 or IB 5 = ENC 1101 and 1102])
- 3) What do I expect to get on IB English and what credit will that earn?
- 4) What can I logically expect to achieve on AP Language? Is the timing of exam OK (May 9 8am; NO conflicts but IB Bio is in the afternoon)?

Two types of people tend to take the optional AP Lang exam: 1) Those who know they can get credit (a score of 3-5) [often going out of state to schools with better AP policies than IB 2) Those who doubt they'll get any English credit from IB or AP and really want to get credit with a 3 score in AP Lang

AP Language is well suited to:

Students who are independent thinkers who can see the rationale behind a variety of viewpoints; who are aware of the world around them; aware of politics, history, the Greeks, and pop culture/basic current events.

Students who can read actively, write well, and think deeply about language as a persuasive tool and about the dynamic relationship of writer, context, audience, and argument.

Students need: wide-ranging vocabulary; a recognition of types of sentence structures; an understanding of rhetoric (tone, voice, emphasis, logic, methods of persuasion, diction; "Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" – ARISTOTLE); awareness of appeals to logos, pathos, ethos; denotation, connotation, inference, implication

TIP: Start reading the editorial pages of the newspaper to see how they construct/present an argument OR watch The Daily Show, The Colbert Report, Hardball, Meet the Press, or O'Reilly Factor or read magazines like Time, Newsweek

TIP: See me or CDR-R to take practice full-length released multiple choice exams from 1987, 1991, 1996, 2001 and others

TIP: Realize AP Lang overlaps with many TOK skills and the SYNTHESIS QUESTION will overlap with DBQs

(multiple sources) from History class – **IT IS A GREAT EXAM** because you can draw from all 6 of your IB subject areas while analyzing how you come to know something through the author's construction of the written word

If you know/like writers such as: **Autobiographies** (Maya Angelou, Richard Wright, Ben Franklin, Frederick Douglass); **History Writers** (Winston Churchill, Arthur Schlesinger, Doris Kearns-Goodwin); **Critics** (Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Louis Gates Jr, George Bernard Shaw, Cornel West); **Essayists** (Zora Neale Hurston, Francis Bacon, Joan Didion, N. Scott Momaday, V.S. Naipaul, George Orwell, Henry David Thoreau, E.B. White); **Journalists** (Maureen Dowd, David Halberstam, H.L. Mencken); **Political Writers** (MLK, WEB DuBois, Thomas Jefferson, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, Machiavelli, John Milton, Thomas More, Thomas Paine, George Will, Jonathan Swift, de Tocqueville); **Science Writers** (Rachel Carson, Margaret Mead, Carl Sagan, Darwin, Stephen Jay Gould)

Prompts could be like (see me or class website for any prompt from the last 20 years):

A) speeches (Lincoln, Queen Liz); B) comparative essays on a setting or event (like a Russian vs USA news article on Sputnik); C) early vs later drafts; D) satires (readtheonion.com); E) Autobiop passages (Hurston); F) Historical Documents or Supreme Court Decisions; G) Letters; H) Defend/Challenge/Qualify a premise or argument or passage; I) Analysis of how rhetorical techniques are used to convey author's attitude toward X

NOTE YOU WILL SEE A SYNTHESIS QUESTION (55 minutes – 15 min reading; 40 min essay) – see last page of handout!!! You should see some of these in your TOK classes!

National AP Lit Averages

avg. typically 2.80 to 2.95;

- 300,000+ take AP Lang every year

5 Score = 11%

4 Score = 20%

3 Score = 30% (these avgs from 2011)

2 Score = 28%

1 Score = 11%

National Pass Rate = 57-62%

2011 AP Language and Comp

Free-Response Questions Scoring Statistics

Question	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of Points Possible
1	4.88	1.58	9
2	4.41	1.73	9
3	4.44	1.87	9

Your response to a passage should include analysis of:

- ✓ language, style, and rhetorical devices
- ✓ Subject / theme / author's purpose / point of view / intellectual and emotional tone
- ✓ grammatical and logical organization

(consider how each and all of these help to contribute to the writer's clarity of communication to the reader.)

Organize your essay so you achieve:

- 1) **Unity** - a composition has unity when each sentence and each paragraph are related to the subject of the essay.
- 2) **Coherence** - coherence is attained by arranging ideas in logical sequence, each idea leading to the one that follows.
- 3) **Emphasis** - emphasis involves the use of structures - periodic and/or loose sentences - diction, figurative expressions, and tone that highlight the thrust of the writer's expression.

(Remember, unlike IB, where they are looking for many more things in much greater depth, AP is essentially interested in a well-written and structured response that stays on topic and answers the question with some level of persuasion.)

With each essay response you WILL NOT:

- have enough time to write a detailed or complete introduction OR conclusion paragraphs. Your introductions and conclusions should be more fluid and a maximum of three sentences. Your conclusion may only be a summary statement of your ideas and overall effect of the passage on you.
- have enough time to create either a detailed outline or write both a first and final draft

With each essay response you SHOULD:

- ❑ always have a thesis or argument you intend to prove and answer the question asked.
- ❑ have three or four central topic ideas as well as the details (examples, illustrations, proof, other techniques of argumentative writing) to support your thesis statement.
- ❑ write for around or above 300 words. Papers above a 5 almost always make it to a 3rd side of paper!!
- ❑ use transitions between paragraphs or each topic idea.
- ❑ write for at least half of the allotted time for each question. The other time should be spent reading the passage and preparing to write the essay.
- ❑ brainstorm in the space provided underneath the essay question.
- ❑ underline and make margin notes as you read each passage or question. Be an active reader!!!!

Advanced Placement Essays: Helpful Hints

1. Don't present yourself as an immature writer

- AP readers grade 20+ essays an hour and your handwriting may affect attentiveness. Don't make it difficult for the reader to "see" your thinking

2. Avoid those serious errors, which will mark you as an unprepared writer.

- comma splices – running two independent clauses together without a conjunction and with only a comma; Run-on sentences omit the comma and present the same problem; also avoid sentence fragments and spelling errors

3. Write sentences that are smooth, flowing, clear, sensible; avoid short, choppy sentences.

- Proofread to make sure that your wording is not so confused, awkward, or ineffective that the reader cannot figure out what you are saying. Also, use sentence variety to develop a more sophisticated style.
- Sentences whose structures enable you to express layered understandings effectively will mark you as a mature writer. Sentences which are sharp, precise, and clear but which at the same time show complexity characterize the best writing.

4. Pay attention to organization and content: THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES.

- Keep your focus clear throughout your essay; make certain the thoughts are in a logical sequence that is continually connected to the focus, thus yielding a unified essay. Think through you whole answer before you begin.
- Use specific details (brainstormed or passage quotations) frequently to support and illustrate your points.
- Once you begin writing, try to maintain a continuous, logical, and focused flow. You may have new insights as you proceed, but try to connect continually where you began, where you are, and where you are going with your central idea.

What AP Readers Long to See

1. Read the prompt. Do everything the prompt asks. Find the key words in the prompt and use them in your response.
2. Think before you write. Plan your response. It is not easy for the reader to pick over an essay attempt to decipher sentences. A little organization will help you avoid extensive editing.
3. Begin your response quickly. Do not take a circuitous route with generalizations or wordy intro.
4. Be thorough and specific. Do not simply "point out" strategies. Explain how they are used, give examples, and show how they establish what the question is asking (analysis of effects of techniques). No long quotes!
5. Use clear transitions that help the reader follow the flow of your essays. Keep your paragraphs organized; do not digress.
6. Write to express, not to impress. Keep vocabulary and syntax within your zone of competence. Students who inflate their writing often inadvertently entertain, but seldom explain.
7. Demonstrate that you understand style. Show the reader how the author has developed the selection to create the desired effect. This indicates that you understand the intricacies of the creative process.
8. Maintain an economy of language: saying much with few words. The best student writers see much, but say it quite succinctly. Often ideas are embedded rather than listed.
9. Let your writing dance with ideas and insights. You can receive a 6 or a 7 with a lockstep approach, but the essays that earn 8's and 9's expand to a wider perspective.

TIP: If you are taking AP Language exam, get me a blank CD-R so I can burn all the prep materials for AP English: Language and Composition because we won't be covering it again after August

**2005 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts one-third of the total essay section score.)

The passage below is from “Training for Statesmanship” (1953), an article written by George F. Kennan, one of the principal architects of United States foreign policy during the period following the end of the Second World War. Read the passage carefully and select what you believe is Kennan’s most compelling observation. Then write an essay in which you consider the extent to which that observation holds true for the United States or for any other country. Support your argument with appropriate evidence.

In our country, the element of power is peculiarly diffused. It is not concentrated, as it is in other countries, in what we might call the “pure form” of a national uniformed police establishment functioning as the vehicle of a central political will. Power with us does exist to some extent in courts of law and in police establishments, but it also exists in many other American institutions. It exists in our economic system, though not nearly to the degree the Marxists claim. Sometimes, unfortunately, it exists in irregular forces—in underworld groups, criminal gangs, or informal associations of a vigilante nature—capable of terrorizing their fellow citizens in one degree or another. Above all, it exists in the delicate

15 compulsions of our social life, the force of community opinion within our country—in the respect we have for the good opinion of our neighbors. For reasons highly complex, we Americans place upon ourselves quite extraordinary obligations of conformity to the group in utterance and behavior, and this feature of our national life seems to be growing rather than declining. All these things can bring us to put restraints upon ourselves which in other parts of the world would be imposed upon people only by the straightforward exercise of the central police authority.

**2005 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

Question 3

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts one-third of the total essay section score.)

In “The Singer Solution to World Poverty,” an article that appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*, Peter Singer, a professor of bioethics, calls attention to the urgent need for food and medicine in many parts of the world. Singer argues that prosperous people should donate to overseas aid organizations such as UNICEF or Oxfam America all money not needed for the basic requirements of life. “The formula is simple: whatever money you’re spending on luxuries, not necessities, should be given away.”

Write an essay in which you evaluate the pros and cons of Singer’s argument. Use appropriate evidence as you examine each side, and indicate which position you find more persuasive.

2005 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Question 2

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts one-third of the total essay section score.)

The following article is a mock press release from *The Onion*, a publication devoted to humor and satire. Read the article carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze the strategies used in the article to satirize how products are marketed to consumers.

Line
5 MASSILLON, OH—Stressed and sore-footed Americans everywhere are clamoring for the exciting new MagnaSoles shoe inserts, which stimulate and soothe the wearer’s feet using no fewer than five forms of pseudoscience.

10 “What makes MagnaSoles different from other insoles is the way it harnesses the power of magnetism to properly align the biomagnetic field around your foot,” said Dr. Arthur Bluni, the pseudoscientist who developed the product for Massillon-based Integrated Products. “Its patented Magna-Grid design, which features more than 200 isometrically aligned Contour Points™, actually soothes while it heals, restoring the foot’s natural bio-
15 flow.”

“MagnaSoles is not just a shoe insert,” Bluni continued, “it’s a total foot-rejuvenation system.”

20 According to scientific-sounding literature trumpeting the new insoles, the Contour Points™ also take advantage of the semi-plausible medical technique known as reflexology. Practiced in the Occident for over eleven years, reflexology, the literature explains, establishes a correspondence between every point on the human foot and another
25 part of the body, enabling your soles to heal your entire body as you walk.

30 But while other insoles have used magnets and reflexology as keys to their appearance of usefulness, MagnaSoles go several steps further. According to the product’s Web site, “Only MagnaSoles utilize the healing power of crystals to restimulate dead foot cells with vibrational biofeedback . . . a process similar to that by which medicine makes people better.”

35 In addition, MagnaSoles employ a brand-new, cutting-edge form of pseudoscience known as Terranometry, developed specially for Integrated

Products by some of the nation’s top pseudoscientists.

40 “The principles of Terranometry state that the Earth resonates on a very precise frequency, which it imparts to the surfaces it touches,” said Dr. Wayne Frankel, the California State University biotrician who discovered Terranometry. “If the frequency of one’s foot is out of alignment with the Earth, the
45 entire body will suffer. Special resonator nodules implanted at key spots in MagnaSoles convert the wearer’s own energy to match the Earth’s natural vibrational rate of 32.805 kilofrankels. The resultant harmonic energy field rearranges the foot’s naturally
50 occurring atoms, converting the pain-nuclei into pleasing comfortrons.”

Released less than a week ago, the \$19.95 insoles are already proving popular among consumers, who are hailing them as a welcome alternative to
55 expensive, effective forms of traditional medicine.

“I twisted my ankle something awful a few months ago, and the pain was so bad, I could barely walk a single step,” said Helene Kuhn of Edison, NJ. “But
60 after wearing MagnaSoles for seven weeks, I’ve noticed a significant decrease in pain and can now walk comfortably. Just try to prove that MagnaSoles didn’t heal me!”

Equally impressed was chronic back-pain sufferer Geoff DeAngelis of Tacoma, WA.

65 “Why should I pay thousands of dollars to have my spine realigned with physical therapy when I can pay \$20 for insoles clearly endorsed by an intelligent-looking man in a white lab coat?” DeAngelis asked. “MagnaSoles really seem like they’re working.”

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AP Language and Composition Sample Prompts (40 min)

1. A weekly feature of The New York Times Magazine is a column by Randy Cohen called “The Ethicist”, in which people raise ethical questions to which Cohen provides answers. The question below is from the column that appeared on April 4, 2003.

At my high school, various clubs and organizations sponsor charity drives, asking students to bring in money, food and clothing. Some teachers offer bonus points on tests and final averages as incentives to participate. Some parents believe that this sends a morally wrong message, undermining the value of charity as a selfless act. Is the exchange of donations for grades OK?

The practice of offering incentives for charitable acts is widespread, from school projects to fund drives by organizations such as public television stations, to federal income tax deductions for contributions to charities. In a well-written essay, develop a position on the ethics of offering incentives for charitable acts. Support your position with evidence from your reading, observation, and/or experience.

2. Any change for the better brings its own evil with it, and so one powerful consideration should always be in the back of our minds: if we release this good thing, what evil is likely to escape with it?
Select a change for the better that has occurred or that you would like to see occur in society and, in a well-organized essay, analyze both its desirable and undesirable effects. 1983 Q1
3. The list below is made up of pairs of words that are closely related in meaning but differ in connotation. Select one or more pairs; then write an essay in which you discuss and elaborate on the distinctions between the words. Include considerations such as how, when, where, why and by whom each word is likely to be used:
Art..Craft/Faith..Creed/Gang..Club/Intelligent..Smart/Labor..Work/Lady..Woman/Religion..Cult/Terrorist..Revolutionary 86 Q2
4. “It is human nature to want patterns, standards, and a structure of behavior. A pattern to conform to is a kind of shelter.”
In a well-written essay, evaluate the truth of the assertion above. Use evidence or examples from your reading or experience to make your argument convincing. 86Q3
5. Imagine that you have been asked to contribute to a magazine or newspaper an article about a specific place. Write such an article, describing a place that you know well and that might be of interest or significance to your readers. Besides defining that interest or significance, your article should use its descriptive detail to make clear your attitude towards the place you describe. 88Q3
6. The first chapter of Ecclesiastes, a book in the Bible, concludes with these words, “For in much wisdom is much grief, and increase of knowledge is increase of sorrow.”
Write a carefully reasoned, persuasive essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies this assertion. Use evidence from your observation, experience, or reading to develop your position. 91Q3
7. In The Spectator (12/15/1711), Joseph Addison wrote: “If the talent of ridicule were employed to laugh men out of vice and folly, it might be of some use to the world; but instead of this, we find that it is generally made use of to laugh men out of virtue and good sense, by attacking everything that is solemn and serious, decent and praiseworthy in human life.”
Write a carefully reasoned persuasive essay that defends, challenges or qualifies Addison’s assertion. Use evidence from your observation, experience, or reading to develop your position. 92Q2
8. In Antigone, wise Teiresias observes, “Think: all men make mistakes, but a good man yields when he knows his course is wrong and repairs the evil: the only crime is pride.”
Take some time to think about the implications of the quotation. Then write a carefully reasoned essay that explores the validity of the assertion, using examples from your reading, observation, or experience to develop your position. 99Q3
8. Contemporary life is marked by controversy. Choose a controversial local, national, or global issue with which you are familiar. Then, using appropriate evidence, write an essay that carefully considers the opposing positions on this controversy and proposes a solution or compromise. 04Q2
9. Michael Ignatieff, Professor of the Practice of Human Rights Policy at Harvard University, made the following observation: “To belong is to understand the tacit codes of the people you live with.”
Consider how unspoken rules help define group identity. Then write a carefully reasoned essay that examines the relationship between unspoken rules and belonging. Use specific examples to develop your position. 04 FormB Q3

Upcoming Changes to the AP English Language and Composition Exam

Beginning in **May 2007**, the AP English Language and Composition Exam will contain a new type of essay question and multiple-choice questions about the use of documentation and citation skills.

Essay Question Changes

Currently, there are three 40-minute questions in the essay section of the exam. Beginning in **May 2007**, the prompt and stimulus for one of these questions will change to highlight synthesis skills. Students will read a number of related documents and respond to a prompt that requires them to cite a certain number of the documents in support of an argument or analysis. There will be an additional 15-minute reading period to accommodate the added reading. The total number of essay questions will still be three, and there will still be 40 minutes of writing time allotted for each question.

Multiple-Choice Changes

Beginning in **May 2007**, some questions in the multiple-choice section will refer to documentation and citation of sources. While students will not be required to have memorized any particular styles (for example, MLA, Chicago, APA, etc.), they will be responsible for gleaning information from citations that may follow any one of these (or other) styles. At least one of the passages in the multiple-choice section will be from a published work (book, journal, periodical, etc.) that includes footnotes or a bibliography; the documentation questions will be based on these passages. The total number of multiple-choice items will not change.

English Language and Composition
Reading Time: 15 minutes
Suggested Writing Time: 40 minutes

Directions: The following prompt is based on the accompanying six sources.

This question requires you to integrate a variety of sources into a coherent, well-written essay. *Refer to the sources to support your position; avoid mere paraphrase or summary. Your argument should be central; the sources should support this argument.*

Remember to attribute both direct and indirect citations.

Introduction

Television has been influential in United States presidential elections since the 1960's. But just what is this influence, and how has it affected who is elected? Has it made elections fairer and more accessible, or has it moved candidates from pursuing issues to pursuing image?

Assignment

Read the following sources (including any introductory information) carefully. **Then, in an essay that synthesizes at least three of the sources for support, take a position that defends, challenges, or qualifies the claim that television has had a positive impact on presidential elections.**

Refer to the sources as Source A, Source B, etc.; titles are included for your convenience.

- Source A (Campbell)
- Source B (Hart and Triece)
- Source C (Menand)
- Source D (Chart)
- Source E (Ranney)
- Source F (Koppel)

Note:

AP
Synthesis
Question
Sample