



## AP<sup>®</sup> English Language & Composition 2003 Scoring Commentary Form B

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**Question 1**

**Sample H: Score 9**

The 9 essay in this set (H) is effective in its analysis of the rhetorical strategies Downe uses to persuade his wife to emigrate to America, and it is a 9 rather than an 8 by virtue of its full, apt analysis. This writer deals with virtually the entire letter, intelligently analyzing tone, imagery, hyperbole, simile, audience awareness, and refutation of his wife's possible objections, thoroughly supporting each point with accurate paraphrase or smoothly integrated direct quotes. The writing is not flawless ("romantic" does not seem quite the word to describe Downe's efforts in the New World), but it is generally effective, particularly in its mastery of sentences that convey a combination of analysis and support.

**Sample G: Score 8**

Although at first glance the 8 essay in this set (G) may look like a merely competent 5-paragraph essay, it effectively analyzes many of Downe's rhetorical strategies, including factual and numerical detail (which this writer labels "exponential" support), refutation of objections, exaggeration/hyperbole, and generalization, drawing relevant details and quotes from the passage. The writing is effective, with few errors. This is a good example of a short, concise essay that deserves an 8.

**Sample T: Score 6**

The 6 essay in this set (T) adequately analyzes Downe's rhetorical strategies, devoting almost the entire essay to discussing Downe comparison of American to England. There is less analysis and more description of the strategies than in the 8 and 9 essays. The support drawn from Downe's letter is sometimes merely labeled and described rather than analyzed. The writer's incisive point about syntax is not supported.

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**Question 2**

**Sample A: Score 9**

The 9 essay in this set (A) effectively defends Sanders' ideas about the relationship between the individual and society, providing three thoughtful and extremely well-developed examples that reflect the sophistication of Sanders' ideas. Not a word is wasted: even the introduction contains a compelling instance of the power of collaborative work. Although there are a few stylistic infelicities ("I experienced such an experience"), for the most part the language serves the writer well: the pack animal metaphor, although startling, works well with the Einstein example, and another unusual choice ("strive" instead of "thrive") is more appropriate to the Einstein example than the conventional choice would have been.

**Sample B: Score 8**

The 8 essay in this set (B) effectively defends Sanders' ideas, looking at the pro's and con's of a community too small to permit its members to be anonymous, as well as the benefits and drawbacks of a community too large to offer its members a sense of belonging. The evidence (logic, generic examples, and *The Scarlet Letter*) is appropriate, although the interpretation of Hester's attitude towards the community is not accurate. In recognizing the moral connotations of being "held upright" by the web of community, this writer displays a nice understanding of nuance. The language is effective and correct overall, but not impressive enough for a higher score.

**Sample D: Score 6**

The 6 essay in this set (D) adequately challenges Sanders' ideas. The writer's argument is generally sound, and the evidence (Los Angeles and the analogy of the table with different numbers of legs) is sufficient. However, the argument is barely cogent; Sanders would merely argue that Los Angeles doesn't yet have the critical mass of passers-through to cause a breakdown. The prose is generally clear, except for the puzzling statement that Sanders' ideas are both utopian and apocalyptic, which is probably a result of faulty diction.

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**Question 3**

**Sample A: Score 9**

The 9 essay in this set (A) effectively develops a position on virtually every issue raised in the news story, supporting the position with a step-by-step analysis of the events in Piper, Kansas and a thoughtful evaluation of their moral implications. The writer also fits the events into the wider context of American values. Since the story is complicated, it takes advanced critical thinking and writing to proceed through it without becoming confused, and this writer's ability to do so is what merits a score of 9 rather than 8. A wide range of the elements of effective writing are displayed, including impressively complex sentences when they are warranted.

**Sample W: Score 8**

The 8 essay in this set (W) effectively develops a position on plagiarism and the national decline in integrity, supporting the position first by comparing plagiarism to other forms of stealing and cheating, and then by discussing similar lapses in integrity such as the Enron scandal. The somewhat personal tone is attractive and effective. The arguments and evidence are clear, but not sophisticated enough for a higher score; a wide range of the elements of effective writing are displayed, but given the transcription and sentence-level errors, the language is not impressive enough for a higher score.

**Sample D: Score 6**

The 6 essay in this set (D) adequately develops a position on the issues raised in the story, concentrating on parental involvement in education, parental responsibility for instilling values in their children, and plagiarism as it relates to the internet. The arguments are sound but merely adequate, involving repetition rather than thorough development. The prose is generally clear but marred by subject-verb agreement errors and faulty punctuation. The dateline at the beginning is a token gesture towards the editorial format requested by the prompt.