

AP[®] ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

The score should reflect a judgment of the essay's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 15 minutes to read and 40 minutes to write; therefore, the essay is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards that are appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the essay as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well.

All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional flaws in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into the holistic evaluation of an essay's overall quality. In no case may an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics be scored higher than a 2.

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- 9 Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for 8 essays and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, skillful in their synthesis of sources, or impressive in their control of language.

8 Effective

Essays earning a score of 8 **effectively** develop a position on the effects of advertising. They support the position by successfully synthesizing* at least three of the sources. The argument is convincing, and the sources effectively support the student's position. The prose demonstrates an ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

- 7 Essays earning a score of 7 fit the description of 6 essays but are distinguished by more complete or more purposeful argumentation and synthesis of sources, or a more mature prose style.

6 Adequate

Essays earning a score of 6 **adequately** develop a position on the effects of advertising. They synthesize at least three of the sources. The argument is generally convincing and the sources generally support the student's position, but the argument is less developed or less cogent than the arguments of essays earning higher scores. The language may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

- 5 Essays earning a score of 5 develop a position on the effects of advertising. They support the position by synthesizing at least three sources, but their arguments and their use of sources are somewhat limited, inconsistent, or uneven. The argument is generally clear, and the sources generally support the student's position, but the links between the sources and the argument may be strained. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the writer's ideas adequately.

4 Inadequate

Essays earning a score of 4 **inadequately** develop a position on the effects of advertising. They attempt to present an argument and support the position by synthesizing at least two sources but may misunderstand, misrepresent, or oversimplify either their own argument or the sources they include. The link between the argument and the sources is weak. The prose of 4 essays may suggest immature control of writing.

* For the purposes of scoring, synthesis refers to combining the sources and the writer's position to form a cohesive, supported argument, and accurately citing sources.

AP[®] ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1 (continued)

- 3** Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4 but demonstrate less understanding of the sources, less success in developing their own position, or less control of writing.

2 Little Success

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in developing a position on the effects of advertising. They may merely allude to knowledge gained from reading the sources rather than citing the sources themselves. These essays may misread the sources, fail to present an argument, or substitute a simpler task by merely responding to the question tangentially or merely summarizing the sources. The prose of 2 essays often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing, such as a lack of development or organization, grammatical problems, or a lack of control.

- 1** Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for a score of 2 but are especially simplistic, are weak in their control of writing, or do not cite even one source.

0 Indicates an on-topic response that receives no credit, such as one that merely repeats the prompt.

— Indicates a blank response or one that is completely off topic.

Writers, pundits, and concerned parents malign advertising as a poison to the minds of the innocent, unsuspecting masses. Shady corporate representatives merely state that advertisements from their companies ~~are~~ simply "inform" the public. Advertising certainly has positive and negative effects, such as informing the public or manipulating consumers, but the most important effect of advertising is that it fosters democratic dissemination of information and allows any institution or individual the freedom ~~to~~ ~~to~~ ~~to~~ that is so crucial to an open society.

Those who claim that advertising manipulates certainly have strong examples of the power that advertising has to ~~to~~ manipulate. Cigarette companies notoriously — and despicably — manipulated the public for years by making people think that smoking was not only not a serious health hazard but also ~~prevented~~ that ~~the~~ most people smoke (Source B).



1

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1A

2 of 4

Advertising has also been used to arouse in consumers a sincere belief that ~~some~~ certain luxuries, even many trivialities, are actually necessities (source F). These effects of advertising are clear evidence that ads can, despite conscious audience dismissal of their influence, instill in consumers at a subconscious level a sincere desire for a specific product (Source E).

~~Experts~~ Experts on advertising ~~assert~~ assert that ads can be very effective. They do not, however, question the ethics of advertising when it is being used for the common good.

~~Advertising~~ Advertising tactics, named in the hands of greedy corporations "deceitful", are in the hands of nonprofits, political movements, and public services "effective". This is because advertising in the aforementioned forms, all working for good, has an extremely positive effect on society. Ads can help organizations such as the Red Cross save lives (Source A). Many of the advertisements we skim over



or ignore completely fund our radio, internet, and television content (Source D). Advertising is often didactic (Source C) and ~~results~~ results in a more informed public. The same tools, once decried as unethical, can be used for highly laudable purposes.

~~Advertisement is another form of speech~~

Advertisement at its very core is speech. It is a method to convey information, much like a voice. Are the vocal cords responsible for hateful or deceitful speech that resonates through them? The most important - yet ~~often~~ least often discussed - effect of advertising is its role in protecting free and open discussion in our society. All individuals and institutions have the same venues through which they can express themselves open as a result of advertising. Its power (Source E) is clear, yet that power, ~~power~~ just as any power, can be used for positive or negative effect in society.



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1A 4 of 4

Both sides of the heated debate over the effects of advertising can point to positive and negative effects. But both sides also miss the point: advertising's effects on society are the same as those of speech. Both mediums are not responsible for their content. Freedom of both speech and advertising results in a great overall benefit to society in that it nurtures democracy. Advertising is seen as a cause of ~~terrible~~ terrible aspects of society, but in reality, the content, not the advertisement, is responsible. Please, don't shoot the messenger.

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People pull up a webpage, instantly, five pop-ups appear. Flashing red lights or half-naked women try to catch their attention. Walk down the street, a bus passes by advertising the newest Hollywood flick. Advertising has become a part of everyday life and most Americans are more than aware of it. Every aspect of our lives has been infiltrated by companies trying to promote their products; sometimes it's ~~so~~ irritating, but it can also be helpful. While advertising can promote unhealthy behavior, it more often benefits consumers by keeping them informed and showing them what products are out there.

There is no doubt that the advertising of certain products and the products' resulting use can sometimes be detrimental for consumers. Cigarette use is probably the most potent example of this fact. Companies like Marlboro and Merit spend billions of dollars a year targeting teens who are most often not legally allowed to buy cigarettes yet. Advertising "promotes the continued social acceptability"



of smoking" ~~and~~ (Source B) and makes teens think smoking will make them seem more mature. What cigarette ads don't say, however, is that smoking can lead to emphysema, lung, throat, and mouth cancer, and death. ~~These~~ Cigarette companies ~~used~~ ^{figured} ~~it~~ early on that putting a man with a hole in trachea ~~&~~ side-by-side with a model wearing a bikini was the greatest advertising strategy. The fact that informed citizens choose to smoke when most know that it could kill them, only shows how effective cigarette advertising has become.

~~While cigarette companies~~ Cigarette companies are not the only ones advertising though. As mentioned in Source D, there are now advertisements that promote the use of seatbelts, avoidance of drugs and alcohol, and ~~also~~ ~~advertise~~ ~~the~~ inform citizens on the dangers of smoking. Companies like "truth" have begun countering the advertisements that promote unhealthy behavior. "Truth" reports the facts about smoking and sends



a clear message to consumers: smoking is not cool; it could kill you.

Advertising can also be essential to keeping people informed. Ads ~~let~~ let us decide which products suit our needs best and show us what is available. Source C points out that advertising is essential when people want to buy a new car or house; without it, how would we be able to easily compare one product to another? To research a company and/or its products takes time that many Americans don't have. ~~Ads~~ Advertising is a way to quickly learn facts and let a company tell you what they are all about.

Not all ads are for products; some are meant to encourage healthful and helpful actions. Source A is a prime example of the positive promotion that ads can contain. One pint of donated blood could save three other people's lives, but would anyone know when or where a blood drive was taking place if there was no advertising? ~~Ads~~ Ads help people make political choices too. How would most people



i

1B 4 of 4

know where politicians stand on important issues if there were no ads on television or radio? The truth is that without advertising many people would find themselves confused and uninformed. Ads help bring vital information to citizens quickly.

Ads can sometimes be frustrating. People wish they could watch a show on television without eight minutes of commercials interrupting the half hour program. ~~But when it comes down to election time, ads really help people make informed decisions.~~ Ads can be annoying and when they are for products that hurt consumers they can be all together irritating. But imagine if there were no ads. How would people know that smoking causes cancer if they weren't taught it in school? How would we ~~know about~~ ^{compare} the prices of similar cars or insurances policies? ~~Advertising represents a sharp~~ In advertising, there is a sharp dichotomy. Ads can hurt people but they more often help them. ~~and~~ The ~~costs~~ social and economic benefits of advertising clearly outway the costs.

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Advertising plays an enormous role in the lives of the members of our society. While this role is an important one and would be difficult to be eliminated, many argue that advertising's effects are ~~damaging~~ harmful and a form of propaganda. However, advertising plays a most important role in educating, ~~and~~ and the positive effects ~~outweigh~~ outweigh the negative.

Advertising, in its most basic form is "teaching, pure and simple" (Source C). We receive education everyday through the form of advertising. It is perhaps most effective in this matter because advertising has a way of connecting with people of all ages and denominations. Advertisers use techniques in such a way that it "works below the level of conscious awareness" (Source E). While many may consider this to be a ~~negative~~ ^{it can also} ~~negative~~ ^{it can also} tactic used by advertisers to lure us into ^{buying} ~~products~~ ^{products}, persuade us to think a different way, and is a benefit in the education of important matters concerning our society. ~~Organizations~~

Organizations such as The American Red Cross use pathos in their advertising to create a connection with the viewer to persuade



1

1C_{2 of 3}

them to donate blood (Source A). Through this technique the American Red Cross may have success in educating a majority of the population on the importance of their matter. The effectiveness of this advertisement would be difficult to achieve using a different medium.

Many argue that advertising is a "form of violence," ~~forcing~~^{forcing} its viewers to accept certain ideas, however the viewer has a choice whether to accept, or not accept the message being presented to them (Source F). Advertising is simply an opportunity to decide how one will use the information. It is ~~is~~ similar to any time you are presented with new material, or some one is presenting a new idea. One is always going to advocate special qualities to persuade others to listen and accept. Advertising has only taken this a step further by studying and mastering this technique.

It is ultimately up to the viewer to decide how advertising will affect them. They may choose to be educated or choose to not, however advertising will always be there to



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1C 3 of 3

give them the extra push.

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AP[®] ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

2007 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 1

Overview

This year's first prompt represented the debut of a new type of question for AP English Language and Composition, the synthesis essay. Students were given six brief sources, one of which was an advertisement that combined graphic and textual information, and directed to write a coherent, argumentative essay that synthesized at least three of the sources in support of their position on the effects of advertising in contemporary society. The students received this explicit instruction: "*Your argument should be central; the sources should support this argument. Avoid merely summarizing sources.*"

Sample: 1A

Score: 8

This essay begins strongly, as the student surveys a broad view of the topic at hand, the effects of advertising, but then moves quickly to establish a more focused perspective—namely, that advertising “fosters democratic dissemination of information and allows any institution or individual the freedom that is so crucial to an open society.” The modifiers, both individual words and relative clauses (“democratic” and “that is so crucial to an open society”), not only lend clarity and finesse to the central assertion but also provide a map for the student (and reader) to follow in the remainder of the response. The essay then provides a very capable synthesis of three sources (B, F, and E), all the while shaping and controlling the citations so that the writing logically supports the point stated in the opening sentence of the second paragraph: “Those who claim that advertising manipulates certainly have strong examples of the power that advertising has to manipulate.” The student comments on the sources—even with a brief interruptive phrase like “and despicably”—as well as summarizes them. By beginning the second paragraph with “Those who claim . . .,” the student is setting up the essay for the very effective contrastive transition that begins the third paragraph, which maintains that “Experts on advertising . . . do not, however, question the ethics of advertising when it is being used for the common good.” The student skillfully and fluently argues that advertising techniques seen “in the hands of greedy corporations” as “deceitful” are seen “in the hands of nonprofits, political movements, and public services” as “effective.” Not only is this ability to draw such contrasts the mark of an effective writer, but so also are the balance and control of diction and examples. As in the previous paragraph, the student offers a well-controlled synthesis of three sources (A, D, and C) in support of the claim that “advertising . . . has an extremely positive effect on society.” Rather than simply stopping at this point, the student ends with a flourish that ties the conclusion back to the mention of “democratic dissemination” and an “open society” in the introduction. The two final paragraphs develop a metaphor and a very intelligent analogy based on it: Advertising “at its very core is speech,” the student maintains, and just as we value free speech, so must we value the freedom of advertising. “Advertising is seen as a cause of terrible aspects of society, but in reality, the content, not the advertisement, is responsible. Please, don’t shoot the messenger.”

**AP[®] ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
2007 SCORING COMMENTARY**

Question 1 (continued)

Sample: 1B

Score: 6

This essay begins with a series of evocative images, designed to catch the reader's attention and to reinforce the idea that advertising surrounds us, and by the end of the first paragraph has focused on the clear idea, adequately stated, that although "advertising can promote unhealthy behavior, it more often benefits consumers by keeping them informed and showing them what products are out there." The student proceeds to develop the first half of this central claim by describing how cigarette companies have marketed their products. A synthesis of Source B is part of this discussion. Although the syntax on the top of the second page is slightly confusing (for example, the second full sentence on the page is inadvertently missing a "not"), the writing is still completely readable, and the student makes the case. The third paragraph begins with a transitional sentence that briefly alludes to an idea from the previous paragraph before moving on to mention quickly advertising about seatbelt use (from Source D) and then introduce the efforts of an organization (a not-for-profit? an actual company?) called "truth" that tries to counter the unhealthy effects of advertising, such as that from tobacco companies. With simply additive language, the essay next moves to argue that advertising is "essential to keeping people informed" about both products and services. A synthesis of Source C is part of this discussion. The essay ends with a rather interesting discussion, but one that seems disconnected from the rest of the piece. The student ruminates briefly on what our culture would be like without advertising, a discussion that would have been more effective had it been tied more explicitly to the introduction, then concludes by essentially restating the thesis.

Sample: 1C

Score: 4

This essay begins with a broad, rather unfocused paragraph, one that suggests some confusion about whether to argue about advertising in general or about its effects. The central claim is bald and straightforward: "the positive effects outweigh the negative." The development of this claim follows the same pattern in the paragraphs that follow: assertion plus a bit of embedded direct quotation plus a here's-what-this-means gloss from the student. The essay reads like an oversimplified examination answer, dutifully showing that the student has read the sources, rather than an argumentative essay, in which the student has synthesized the source material. The conclusion, "It is ultimately up to the viewer to decide how advertising will affect them," is relatively weak, primarily because the central claim has not been forceful or sophisticated, and the student has not really synthesized the sources but instead has dropped them into sentences.