

# AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

## 2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 3

The score should reflect a judgment of the essay's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 40 minutes to read and 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 explanation and argument or demonstrate particularly impressive control of language.

### **8 Effective**

Essays earning a score of 8 **effectively** develop a position on the ethics of offering incentives for charitable acts. The evidence used is appropriate and convincing. 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 provide a more complete argument or demonstrate a more mature prose style.

### **6 Adequate**

Essays earning a score of 6 **adequately** develop a position on the ethics of offering incentives for charitable acts. The evidence used is appropriate. The writing 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 ethics of offering incentives for charitable acts. These essays may, however, provide uneven, inconsistent, or limited explanations or evidence. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the student's ideas.

### **4 Inadequate**

Essays earning a score of 4 **inadequately** develop a position on the ethics of offering incentives for charitable acts. The evidence used may be insufficient. The prose generally conveys the student's ideas but may suggest immature control of writing.

- 3** Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4 but demonstrate less success in developing a position on the ethics of offering incentives for charitable acts or in providing evidence to support that position. The essays may show less control of writing.

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**Question 3 (continued)**

**2 Little Success**

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in developing a position on the ethics of offering incentives for charitable acts. These essays may misunderstand the prompt or substitute a simpler task by responding to the prompt tangentially with unrelated, inaccurate, or inappropriate evidence. The prose often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing.

- 1** Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for a score of 2 but are undeveloped, especially simplistic in their explanation and argument, or weak in their control of language.
- 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.

Utilitarian philosophers through the ages have ascribed ~~a~~ simple maxim; ~~the~~ goal is "what creates the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people." The "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" nature of incentives for charities benefits both parties and fits easily in with this simple yet effective definition of good. As such, and aided by the examples of life experience, <sup>and</sup> simple economic ~~philosophy~~ it is clear that there is nothing unethical about offering incentives for charitable acts.

Having participated in and donated to many charities in my life, it has become apparent to me that not only is there nothing wrong with offering incentives for charitable acts, it ~~makes~~ incentives make the charities more productive. Our school recently had ~~an~~ a month-long ~~for~~ fundraiser for breast cancer research involving events such as pennies for patients (donate change), stuck for a buck (for the price of \$1 you may add a piece of tape to those ~~notes~~ attaching a friend and/or teacher to a wall) and the burrito mile (pay \$10, get a \$5 burrito and be involved in a mile run). These events raised money in proportion to how amusing they were to students, namely, pennies for patients the least, stuck for a buck in the middle, and the most money (by a healthy margin) raised through the burrito mile. Those that provided the most incentive raised the most money providing greater happiness for both the recipients of donations and the donors themselves, a perfect fit for utilitarian ethics. The story was the same for the "Sue Natur" club. It was the same Dartur benefit concert (quite an entertaining incentive) that raised ~~the~~ the most money when compared with simple



requests for donations. Not only was more money raised, but the people donating received benefit as well; greater happiness for a greater number. Charitable incentives raise more money and make the donors happy, doing more good than raw charity and proving themselves ethical.

Basic economics further display the advantage in incentives for charity. People feel loath to give money away, but will happily spend \$1 for a soft drink that cost \$5 to produce. Following the same logic it might be difficult to get people to donate \$1 but will pay the same amount for something dramatically less valuable and the profit can be given to charity. Not only this, but in a capitalist society such as our own, people prefer to see people "making their way" than "asking for handouts." This is apparent when people buy girl scout cookies. Some people (my family included) buy the cookies, never to eat them, but would politely decline if a girl scout came to their door and said "Would you give me some money?" Charities function best, and sometimes only function at all, when an incentive is attached to charitable contribution. Because ~~contributions~~<sup>incentives</sup> increase the ability of charities to do good, they are, in fact, ethical.

Some may argue that incentives for charity undermine "the value of charity as a selfless act," but they fail to understand that selflessness is not the primary value of charity. It is true that selflessness is a commendable character trait and equally true that incentives take some of the altruism out of charity. On the other hand, to suppose that the value and purpose of charity lie in the selflessness and altruism of the donor (be it time, money, anything) is to ignore the true purpose of charity: to help the helpless, to defend the defenseless, to do good. The



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Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

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bottom line is that the value of charity lies in the good it does for its cause, not in the moral uprightness of the donors. The poor don't care if donations come from the goodness of our hearts or our attempts to dodge taxes, they care about the help they need. Because incentives allow charities to give more help, furthering their primary benefit to society, the incentives are both ethical and good.

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Charity is something that can be found in a myriad of ways - be it lending a pencil to a friend or stranger or contributing a weekly allowance to a cancer research fund. Whatever it may be, the purpose of such an act is - or at least ought to be - to do for the good of doing. To provide an incentive such as a grade to do charity begins to undermine the importance of what one is ~~do~~ doing. ~~Well~~ An incentive no longer makes it about the charity, but rather about the person doing charity. Providing a student a grade <sup>or other incentive</sup> for participating in charitable acts undermines the essential idea of charity.

Charity is something that should be done for the good of what the outcome is. It is like volunteer work in that if one performs a service for volunteer hours because it is REQUIRED, it is no longer essentially volunteering. The purpose of charity is to help those in need, and ~~one~~ ~~is~~ ~~not~~ ~~one's~~ ~~self~~. When one starts to be rewarded for ~~some~~ something



such as giving clothes that no longer fit properly, it is no longer essentially about the charity, but it instead takes on a sub-meaning of gaining credit for one's self.

Many schools will have food drives during the holiday season. It sounds like a noble and almost utopian idea of everyone banding together to donate to those in need... That is, until one ~~take~~ takes into consideration the fact that ~~every~~ the homeroom with the most canned goods gets a pizza party. Then, it is no longer about the homeless who need food, but rather the incentive of "wow! I'm always wicked hungry during 2nd period and homeroom—let's bring in a ton!" Although people are still ~~coming~~ coming together, ~~it~~ it is no longer ~~in~~ as a whole but is segregated into groups of fifteen to twenty hungry students that all ~~want~~ want pizza.

Although things are still being collected and raised (money, food, ~~and~~ clothes), it is no longer for the sole purpose of



doing good. ~~It~~ It may also be safe to say that more money is being raised, more food being collected with the incentive than it would be if ~~it~~ the only incentive was feeling like a good person.

It may even say something about the American culture as a whole; is it possible that without tangible or visible gain, a person would not act for the good of charity? <sup>An answer to</sup> Such a question may be the underlying ~~of~~ issue at hand.

The ~~idea~~ <sup>practice</sup> of offering an incentive for doing charity work is one that more-or-less ~~is~~ less undermines the ~~point~~ ~~of~~ ~~creating~~ quintessential point of charity in the first place. Charity is something that should be done for the mere fact that it is good. ~~It~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~only~~ ~~incentive~~ ~~towards~~ ~~a~~ If one will only offer ~~charity~~ help to a charity if they are receiving some ~~sort~~ sort of monetary, ~~or~~ ~~is~~ tangible, or visible reward for doing so, things will ~~never~~ ~~get~~ ~~done~~ ~~because~~ ~~it~~ ~~will~~ ~~never~~ get done. Cancer research may never be







conclusive; the food pantries may not be able to remain open. ~~By offering~~ It leaves one wondering: what has ~~the~~ the ~~can~~ culture come to?

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Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

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Charity has always been a most generous form of aid, that has affected many people through out the course of time. ~~Charity is probably one of the most~~

It was the act of charity that helped people after 9/11, Katrina, and many other natural and unnatural disasters.

I do believe that it is O.K. to give incentives for charitable acts. I support my position on reading, my observation of human nature, and my experience with the church.

With many books that I read, some have had the theme of, "Good deeds don't go unnoticed" It is that statement that makes me believe incentives are O.K.

Charity is a good deed that shouldn't go unnoticed.

Even though it's up to one person to give, they should receive something in return.

Another form of evidence to support my thesis is my observation on human nature. It is without a doubt that more than 50% of people are selfish. Some people more selfish than others but in today's world it's hard to give and not want something in return. ~~Human beings~~. With incentives it motivates people to give above and beyond to help. It is sad that people need to be motivated to give, but as long as they give the world can move on and assist these people who are in need of help.

Finally, I ~~state~~ <sup>stand behind</sup> my thesis is from a personal experience. My church was throwing a gathering for children, there were prizes, games, and music ~~which were~~ <sup>as incentives.</sup> Even though



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people had to have incentives to come they were there. They enjoyed them selves and were having fun. There were at least over 200 children and teenagers there. Finally the question was asked for if any one wanted to be saved 87 people step forward and were saved. They ~~chose~~<sup>chose</sup> their fate. They had to be motivated to get there but once they were, they chose for themselves. Its the same with charity. Once people are motivated they then can help.

Through reading, observation of human nature, and personal experience I have come to the conclusion that incentives aren't that bad.

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**2007 SCORING COMMENTARY**

**Question 3**

**Overview**

This question called for students to write a clear, cogent, and compelling argument. The question presented them with a prompt based on Randy Cohen’s column, “The Ethicist,” from the *New York Times Magazine* of April 4, 2003, and directed them to write an essay in which they “develop a position on the ethics of offering incentives for charitable acts.”

**Sample: 3A**

**Score: 9**

This essay begins with a very strong opening paragraph, connecting utilitarian philosophy to the “‘you scratch my back I’ll scratch yours’ nature of incentives [sic] for charities.” The second paragraph relies on an analysis of three specific different incentives-for-charities scenarios, all well developed and well presented, to support the position that there is nothing wrong in offering incentives. The student next moves to analytic reasoning to support this thesis, arguing that “[p]eople feel loath to give money away, but will happily spend \$1 for a soft drink that cost ¢5 to produce” and showing that the same logic prevails in, for example, the purchase of Girl Scout cookies, itself a charitable act. The essay is particularly strong in its conclusion, where an appeal to emotions (selflessness and altruism) appears, as it does frequently in classical orations. The conclusion also skillfully anticipates and addresses a possible counterargument twice. In summary, the fullness of development, the maturity and sophistication of thought, and the control of diction raise the score of this effective essay to 9.

**Sample: 3B**

**Score: 6**

This essay clearly develops the position that offering incentives for charitable acts “undermines the essential idea of charity.” The second paragraph depends on extended definition to establish and support what this essential idea of charity is, and the third paragraph describes the hypothetical case of a canned food drive that earns the most generous homeroom a pizza party, claiming that “[t]hen, it is no longer about the homeless who need food, but rather the incentive of ‘WOW! I’m always wicked hungry during 2nd period and homeroom—let’s bring in a ton!’” The essay continues to develop its point, but it becomes wordy and repetitive at times. It is longer than most essays earning a 6, but it fails to offer either a fuller development or a more mature prose style that would elevate its score. It is completely adequate.

**Sample: 3C**

**Score: 4**

This essay is well organized and at first glance might seem better than it really is. The first paragraph does take a position that “it is O.K. to give incentives for charitable acts,” but the piece does not adequately support that position. The second and third paragraphs, for example, rely solely on opinions unsupported by examples or details. The fourth paragraph does provide an example, but not an effective or persuasive one—it is not completely clear how the narrative offered in the paragraph relates to the central claim about the acceptability of incentives for charitable acts. The brief conclusion returns to the prompt in dutiful, exam-answer fashion. This essay is inadequate to the task at hand. It generally lacks evidence for its assertions, and nothing in its prose style elevates it to the upper half of the score range.