
AP English Language and Composition

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP[®] ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

2018 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

General Directions: This scoring guide is designed so that the same performance expectations are applied to all student responses. It will be useful for most of the essays, but if it seems inappropriate for a specific essay, assistance from the Table Leader should be sought. The Table Leader should always be shown booklets that seem to have no response or that contain responses that seem unrelated to the question. A score of 0 or — should not be assigned without this consultation.

The essay's score should reflect an evaluation of the essay as a whole. Students had only 40 minutes to read and write; the essay, therefore, is not a finished product and should not be judged according to standards appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. The essay should be evaluated as a draft, and students should be rewarded for what they do well. The evaluation should focus on the evidence and explanations that the student uses to support the response; students should not be penalized for taking a particular perspective.

All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional lapses in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into the holistic evaluation of an essay's overall quality. In no case should a score higher than a 2 be given to an essay with errors in grammar and mechanics that persistently interfere with understanding of meaning.

9 – Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for the score of 8 and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, thorough in their development, or impressive in their control of language.

8 – Effective

Essays earning a score of 8 **effectively** analyze* the choices Albright makes to convey her message to the audience. They develop their analysis with evidence and explanations that are appropriate and convincing, referring to the passage explicitly or implicitly. The prose demonstrates a consistent ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

7 – Essays earning a score of 7 meet the criteria for the score of 6 but provide more complete explanation, more thorough development, or a more mature prose style.

6 – Adequate

Essays earning a score of 6 **adequately** analyze the choices Albright makes to convey her message to the audience. They develop their analysis with evidence and explanations that are appropriate and sufficient, referring to the passage explicitly or implicitly. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

5 – Essays earning a score of 5 analyze the choices Albright makes to convey her message to the audience. The evidence and explanations used to develop their analysis may be uneven, inconsistent, or limited. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the student's ideas.

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Question 2 (continued)

4 – Inadequate

Essays earning a score of 4 **inadequately** analyze the choices Albright makes to convey her message to the audience. These essays may misunderstand the passage, misrepresent the choices Albright makes, or analyze these choices insufficiently. The evidence and explanations used to develop their analysis may be inappropriate, insufficient, or unconvincing. The prose generally conveys the student’s ideas but may be inconsistent in controlling the elements of effective writing.

3 – Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for the score of 4 but demonstrate less success in analyzing the choices Albright makes to convey her message to the audience. They are less perceptive in their understanding of the passage or Albright’s choices, or the evidence and explanations used to develop their analysis may be particularly limited or simplistic. The essays may show less maturity in control of writing.

2 – Little Success

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in analyzing the choices Albright makes to convey her message to the audience. The student may misunderstand the prompt, misread the passage, fail to analyze the choices Albright makes, or substitute a simpler task by responding to the prompt tangentially with unrelated or inaccurate explanation. The prose often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing, such as grammatical problems, a lack of development or organization, or a lack of control.

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

0 Indicates an off-topic response, one that merely repeats the prompt, an entirely crossed-out response, a drawing, or a response in a language other than English.

— Indicates an entirely blank response.

* For the purposes of scoring, analysis means explaining the rhetorical choices an author makes in an attempt to achieve a particular effect or purpose.

2

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

2A
(1 of 2)

In her commencement speech to the graduating class of Mount Holyoke College, the secretary of State Madeline Albright ~~states~~ asserts that women must expand their horizons beyond the chains of societal norms to change and impact the world mainly by relying on powerful anaphoras and

~~Albright~~ ~~masterfully~~ ~~anaphoras~~
Albright ~~anaphoras~~ masterfully employs anaphoras to emphasize and reinforce her overarching message. Describing the hardships women in history endured, Albright notes "Each has suffered blows, but each has proceeded with courage. Each has persevered" (Albright 67-68). The repetition of "each has," at the beginning of each phrase serves to emphasize the universal experience of adversities and obstacles. Albright utilizes the momentum generated by these monosyllabic words to allow her audience to pause and home in on "suffered ... but [with] courage, has persevered". This phrase essentially encapsulates Albright's main message that despite all obstacles meticulously placed by the world, ~~over~~ courageous women have time and time again overcome them in order to realize their ^{own} aspirations for change. Moreover, Albright continues this message by repeating "if you aim high enough" in lines 75, 81, and 88. Similar to the common adage "aim for the stars" Albright ~~seeks~~ ^{seeks} to broaden the horizon for her audience - to dare them to venture and brave the unknown. Albright clearly understands that progress and concrete results become reality only when aspirations and desires are met with an equal magnitude of tenacity and determination. By wielding anaphoras as a beacon to unite women in the crusade to challenge the world,



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

2 2A
(2 of 2)

Albright effectively conveys her ~~passion~~^{motivation} for her message.

In conjunction with her use of striking anaphoras, Albright also employs bold diction to further her message. In describing the current standings, Albright reveals that "some suggest [women to] sit sedately down. Instead, women everywhere—whether bumping against a glass ceiling or rising from the dirt floor... spread the word that we are ready to claim our rightful place as full citizens" (Albright lines 39-44).

Albright claims that women defy the societal expectation being "sedate"; ~~to sit~~^{to sit} ~~and~~^{feelings and desires} Rather than lying around helpless and immobile,

Albright invokes words that convey mobility such as "bumping" and "rising".

Like the ocean's waves, the modern woman surges forward in great strides, "rising" and ~~raising~~^{raising} high, waiting for the critical moment to erupt and wash away the shackles^{of societal norms} that once bound women. ~~It~~ In addition, Albright

continues her use of such diction in her final paragraph where she asserts

"Every barrier to justice brought down by your determination will ennoble your own life" (Albright lines 103-105). Instead of remaining in the "sedate"

state, Albright urges her audience to "ennoble" their lives—that to incite change; they must rid themselves of the damsel-in-distress mentality. ~~It~~

~~to~~ She argues that by cleaning a knight's armor of determination,

women can in order to manifest a noble goal, take direct actions for

herself. By using such ~~and~~^{critical} language, Albright strives to instill determination and

harden the resolute minds of her audience. ~~Despite~~^{In the face of} any hardships, Albright

hopes her speech comprised of ^{powerful} anaphoras and ^{bold} diction will inspire and motivate a

new generation of women to "explode outward the boundaries of what is achievable on this earth" (106-107).

#

2

Write in the box the number of the question you are at ^{2B}
on this page as it is designated in the exam. (1 of 3)

In 1997, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright gave a ~~z~~ well-written, motivational speech to a women's college in Massachusetts. Albright was able to successfully employ different rhetorical devices, each of which helped Albright convey her message to the audience.

Throughout the essay, the most effective devices employed were parallel structure, allusions, and metaphors.

Throughout the essay, the use of parallel structure creates a sense of unity and pride in the audience. For example, "we could be satisfied with that... we could relax... we could turn our backs now and risk renewed war... we could stop there..." (Albright). The ~~use~~ use of "we could" at the beginning of these sentences show the United States could stop what they are doing and ~~let~~ let whatever happens happen, but instead are continuing to lead the world toward peace and equality.

The author employs the use of allusions to give examples of the ~~United~~ places around

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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.

2B
2 (2 of 3)

the world that changing partly due to the influence and leadership of the United States. "The fighting in Bosnia has stopped... In Burundi. I have seen women taking the lead in efforts to avoid the fate of neighboring Rwanda, ... In Guatemala, ... And in Burma, ..." (Albright). The use of these allusions shows the audience the global-scale effects the United States' efforts are having. The allusions also motivates the audience to continue to seek peace, prosperity, and equality around the world.

The author incorporates a few significant metaphors into her speech which have significant effects. "... and explode outward the boundaries of what is achievable on this earth" (Albright). This metaphor draws a comparison between the audience's actions and the boundaries of what is thought as achievable on this Earth. This motivates the audience to take on global problems head-on and to not be intimidated by what others consider possible. The metaphor shows the reader that even the smallest actions can bring about large



2

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

2B
(3 of 3)

amounts of change.

This speech, which was read to a women's college in Massachusetts successfully employs the use of metaphors, parallel structure, and allusions to motivate the audience, push them towards greatness, and show how the smallest of actions can change the world.

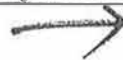
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Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

2 2C
(2 of 2)

~~2001~~ Secretary of state Madeleine Albright cuts straight to the point through her candid force ~~of her words~~ assertiveness. In her first Topic of war she claims that under the power of President Clinton there has been some remarkable outcomes. These special outcomes relate mostly to nuclear war like in the quote, "nuclear weapons no longer target our homes". This shows that Clinton has put some sort of an end towards nuclear war. They also express how they are confident in working which makes her audience feel as if they need to listen to her words, this is ~~expressed~~ expressed through the quote, "we can relax. Instead we are working to rid nuclear ~~weapons~~ arsenals." This is an effort to make the audience feel as if they should trust Clinton and his secretary because they know what ~~what~~ they are doing.

Soon the speaker switches to the subject of women through the quote, "In our ~~lives~~ lifetimes, we have seen enormous advances in the status of women". This is directed towards women to make them feel as if they have achieved so much. This enriches them to show that if they "aim high" be supported by family and friends.



12 - 2

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

2C
(2 of 2)

This motivational decision empowers women to keep progressing.

Perhaps the U.S. may not be perfect but perhaps by the scrutiny of state that are progressing and doing better under the influence of Bill Clinton, that includes America and women.

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Question 2

Overview

This year’s rhetorical analysis question asked students to identify and evaluate the rhetorical choices made in a commencement address, specifically a speech by Madeleine Albright to the graduating class of 1997 at Mount Holyoke College. As in past years, this year’s prompt asked students to consider the rhetorical situation a speaker faces and analyze the choices that the speaker makes in order to elicit appropriate or desirable responses from an audience.

Also as in past years, the prompt provided students with key historical information and context. For students who may not have known anything about this history or context, the prompt supplied specifics regarding the audience (“Mount Holyoke College, a women’s college in Massachusetts”) and date (1997) and noted the speaker’s leadership position at the time (“then United States Secretary of State Madeleine Albright”). This year’s task differed from previous iterations in that it was significantly lengthier; however, its language was very accessible to students.

Within their responses to this rhetorical analysis question, students were expected to explain the choices Albright made in her particular situation for her particular audience and how these choices work. To understand these choices and how they work, a student must first consider the rhetor’s relationship to the audience, as well as how this relationship necessitates both what this specific rhetor should include in — and exclude from — the speech to this specific audience. Additionally, a student must consider how the rhetor arranges the speech for the particular audience in the specific circumstances of the speech. While elements of style certainly merit consideration, they are not the first ingredient on which rhetors focus when developing strategies to persuade audiences: Style is the third canon of rhetoric, not the first or even the second.

In other words, to do well, students needed to understand the purpose of Albright’s speech, what the relationship must have been between Albright and her audience, what the audience’s attitude toward Albright’s message might have been, and how Albright’s specific rhetorical choices worked to make the audience more responsive to her purpose.

Sample: 2A

Score: 8

The opening paragraph of this essay effectively introduces the rhetorical situation, although it is not flawless (note the unfinished last sentence of the paragraph). The body paragraphs develop the analysis with substantial evidence and explanations, which effectively link Albright’s choices (anaphora and “bold diction”) to the speech’s intended message. The second paragraph, for example, explains how particular phrases in Albright’s speech encapsulate her “main message that despite all obstacles meticulously placed by the world, courageous women have time and time again overcome them in order to realize their own aspirations for change.” The third paragraph likewise effectively explains the speech’s deployment of a wide range of “bold diction” and skillfully weaves short quotations into the student’s own sentences. The last two sentences of the third paragraph, although not separated by a paragraph break, function as an effective conclusion, aptly summarizing the initial explanation from the first paragraph (e.g., “Albright hopes her speech comprised of powerful anaphoras and bold diction will inspire and motivate a new generation of women”). The essay is not flawless; a more complete opening paragraph and some more clearly defined paragraph breaks would help. However, it effectively analyzes the choices Albright makes to convey her message and does so with prose that controls a wide range of the elements of effective writing.

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Question 2 (continued)

Sample: 2B

Score: 5

This essay shows a grasp of the rhetorical situation and offers a mostly adequate explanation of it. However, it needs more — and clearer — analysis; e.g., the limited analysis of “metaphors” in the fourth paragraph offers little beyond the obvious point that exploding “outward the boundaries” is a metaphor that somehow applies to “the audience’s actions.” The essay also misrepresents at least one of Albright’s strategies as an essay scored a 4 might do: i.e., in the third paragraph, Albright’s references to Bosnia, Burundi, et al., are not “allusions.” The prose generally conveys the student’s ideas but does not rise to the clarity of that in an essay scored a 6. In sum, the essay contains characteristics of both the “Inadequate” essay and the “Adequate” essay; the resulting unevenness and inconsistency are one of the hallmarks of essays scored a 5.

Sample: 2C

Score: 2

This essay misunderstands the prompt and misreads the passage, substituting a simpler task (i.e., a discussion of U.S. successes “under the power of President Clinton”). It also provides scant analysis of Albright’s choices, doing little more than listing examples from the speech (nuclear war, advances by women, etc.). The prose is simplistic and vague, and it demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing (e.g., “This enriches them to show that if they ‘aim high’ be supported by family and friends” and “This motivative [*sic*] diction empowers women to keep progressing”). As a whole, the essay demonstrates little success in analyzing the choices Albright makes to convey her message.