

2017

**AP**<sup>®</sup> CollegeBoard

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# AP Seminar End of Course Exam

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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# AP Seminar Rubric 2017: End-of-Course Exam

## Part A, Questions 1 to 3

Row	Content Area/ Proficiency	Performance Levels			Points (Max)
		Low	Medium	High	
1	<b>Understand and Analyze Argument</b>	The response misstates the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis.  <b>1</b>	The response identifies, in part and with some accuracy, the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis.  <b>2</b>	The response accurately identifies the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis.  <b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
2	<b>Understand and Analyze Argument</b>	The response correctly identifies at least one of the author’s claims.  <b>2</b>	The response provides a limited explanation of the author’s line of reasoning by accurately identifying some of the claims AND identifying the connections or acknowledging a relationship among them.  <b>4</b>	The response provides a thorough explanation of the author’s line of reasoning by identifying relevant claims and clearly explaining connections among them.  <b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
3	<b>Evaluate Sources and Evidence</b>	The response identifies little evidence. It makes a superficial reference to relevance and/or credibility but lacks explanation.  <b>2</b>	The response explains various pieces of evidence in terms of credibility and relevance, but may do so inconsistently or unevenly.  <b>4</b>	The response evaluates the relevance and credibility of the evidence and thoroughly evaluates how well the evidence is used to support the author’s argument.  <b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

### Additional Scores

In addition to the scores represented on the rubrics, readers can also assign scores of **0** (zero) and **NR** (No Response).

#### 0 (Zero)

- A score of **0** is assigned to a single row of the rubric when the response displays a below-minimum level of quality as identified in that row of the rubric.
- Scores of **0** are assigned to all rows of the rubric when the response is off-topic; a repetition of a prompt; entirely crossed-out; a drawing or other markings; or a response in a language other than English.

#### NR (No Response)

A score of **NR** is assigned to responses that are blank.

**Write your response to PART A, QUESTION 1 on this page only.**

The author argues that greed, despite its benefit to the economy, also is a detriment to human health.

Begin your response to PART A, QUESTION 2 on this page.

The author establishes that growing levels of greed among American consumers is actually driving the economy. He then acknowledges how damaging greed is to the human psyche. His line of reasoning is logical, as it analyzes economic trends that support how greed has influenced consumerism, but is ~~too~~ <sup>largely</sup> unsupported by reliable sources. The connections made between the subclaims are within reason because they follow ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> narrative of a changing American economy and address the consequences as they relate to the claim.

The author, Schumaker, primarily analyzes the ~~rise of~~ decline of "happiness" in relation to the rise of greed. He states that although people in the 1990's had better living conditions than those in the early 1970's, ~~few~~ <sup>more</sup> people are unhappy because of greed. There is no direct connection between these phenomena stated in this article. Furthermore, there are no direct sources stated. Schumaker only cites "sociologists" and "social critics", which are unknown to the reader. This ~~is~~ subclaim, although weakened by its lack of support, does connect to the claim that greed is hurting Americans while benefitting the American economy.

The following subclaim is that ~~the economy~~ <sup>economic demand</sup> has changed from a system where consumers had time to reflect to one of constant desire, or pure greed. Consumers are constantly convinced to get the next newest thing again and again. This ~~claim is strong because it~~ ~~Given outside knowledge about the trends of consumerism, the reader might believe this claim to be strong, but it is not because it does not provide explicit examples or evidence of consumers.~~ This trend is ~~de~~ quoted from the "eminent sociologist" Zygmunt Bauman. His credibility is not established, so it is difficult to trust the evidence provided from his essay. However, it is an improvement upon the last subclaim. This subclaim connects to the last because it explains why consumers are feeling ~~was~~ dissatisfied. Consumers are ~~for~~ feeling dissatisfied because they always have to work for the next and newest ~~is~~ status symbol. The subclaim is ~~develop~~ <sup>developed</sup> upon in the next paragraph, where examples of

Continue your response to PART A, QUESTION 2 on this page.

The products consumers feel the need to buy are given. The author does not state how he knows that consumers are getting the 'bigger and better' products "big is beautiful" products, so the support is questionable. All of the trends toward "overconsumption" and "needless upgrading" support that greed growing greed helps the economy by making consumers ~~consume more~~ spend more, but damages the human satisfaction. Credibility is questionable throughout this subclaim, so the line of reasoning is weakened on that account. However, it is still strengthened by its logic and connections to the claim and previous subclaim.

The author further explains how greed can benefit the ~~economy~~ economy by claiming that it fuels investment. No sources are provided for this subclaim whatsoever, so its line of reasoning is already weak. It relates to the previous subclaim because it demonstrates how investors are reacting to increasing consumer greed. Overall, this subclaim loses focus and lacks the evidence to uphold its line of reasoning.

Schumaker attempts to introduce an <sup>opposite</sup> alternate perspective to that of investors who are enjoying consumer greed with the vague reference to "others." There are no sources used to support his ~~sub~~ subclaim that these "others" realize that ~~greed~~ consumer greed is hurting children too. Despite this flaw, the argument is logical and plausible. It is stated that children are dealing with obesity at higher rates due to ~~in~~ increased advertisement of sugary drinks. This line of reasoning is sensical and appeals to logos and ethos, but is unsupported.

It is also claimed that greed in consumerism is leading to clinical depression. This connects to the theme of ~~decline~~ declining health due to greed. It is supported by an actual psychologist, so this subclaim is the strongest. Increasing depression rates are detrimental to humans, so it ~~can~~ relates to the overall claim as well.

The line of reasoning is weak throughout this article because of its lack of sources and credibility.

**Begin your response to PART A, QUESTION 3 on this page.**

The evidence used in this article may support the subclaims, but does not have credible sources needed for it to be ~~effective~~<sup>effective</sup>. The author relies much too heavily on statistics with no source and what seems to be his own sawy.

The first example of evidence with no source is the reference to "a wide range of studies" in the intro that say that demonstrate how greed is hurting human happiness. However, this subclaim is saved by the reference to The General Survey of the United States, ~~The General~~ Credibility is not stated for the General Survey of the United States, but it at least has ~~notion~~ the suggestion of a national scope.

Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman is called upon next. Again, he is not well-known, but has the benefit of a professional title to save some credibility. He characterizes the shift from a less greedy consumer culture to one of extremely high greed to explain lower ~~satisfaction~~ happiness in the American population. This evidence corroborates the claim that greed hurts human health, but has little basis. ~~It~~ The vagueness of Bauman's characterization leads the audience to wonder how he exactly knew that consumerism has gotten greedier.

~~The subclaim about investment being driven on greed has no real evidence.~~ The next subclaim supported by what seems to be evidence is the subclaim about how greed affects children. It makes sense that increased advertisement has led to increased consumption of sugary drinks and obesity, but there is no source mentioned. It is similar in this sense to the previous subclaim about greed driving investment, which seemed to be based only on personal speculation. It may seem to the author that ~~invest~~ it is obvious that investors are greedy and companies are making children more obese, but he needs to provide sources and credible evidence to support it.

After ~~more~~ vague statements about what mental-health professionals believe about greed, psychologist David Farrugia is introduced. Like Zygmunt Bauman, his credentials are unknown except for his occupation. The evidence used here for the subclaim that greed has increased depression rates is nevertheless strong

Continue your response to PART A, QUESTION 3 on this page.

because it is explicitly stated that greed is connected to conditions like anxiety and reality testing. Thus, it can be established that greed does increase depression and largely detriment human health.

Overall, the ~~g~~ evidence is ineffective because ~~sources~~ most of ~~it~~ the information either has no source or is too vague to make <sup>strong</sup> connections to the subclaims or main claim.

Write your response to PART A, QUESTION 1 on this page only.

The author of "In Greed We Trust" makes the argument that the increase in greed present in today's society is affecting our overall happiness. Greed has made both adults and children "immune to satisfaction" as well as ~~the~~ taking a toll on mental health.



Begin your response to PART A, QUESTION 2 on this page.

The author begins by clarifying his purpose, that money does not equal happiness. He continues on by saying that "the greed economy is toxic to well-being," in his first claim. He argues this leads people to be constantly dissatisfied with material goods and lust for more. He connects this to the idea that greed has changed over time and became more potent. He argues this by giving examples of how society leans towards overconsumption in "premature disposal.." and "needless upgrading." He moves on by connecting this with ~~the~~ the effects of overconsumption on children as well as increased obesity rates. Lastly, he concludes by ~~the~~ claiming that this perpetual unhappiness has taken a toll on mental health, even being called "pleonexia."

Begin your response to PART A, QUESTION 3 on this page.

The author begins by referencing the recent studies on greed; however, he continues on to use evidence from the 1970's and 1990's, leaving, at the least, a 5-10 year gap between then and the time the article was written, and as wide as 34 years. This weakens the overall argument as the evidence is mostly out of date.

The author continues on to use evidence from a ~~report~~ known sociologist ~~and quote from an essay~~ written to support his claim that Capitalism is being changed by greed. This credible source strengthens his claims; however, he fails to produce any new evidence for the next two paragraphs and relies solely on the report from the sociologist. This lack ~~of~~ of evidence weakens his overall claim.

Moreover, the author claims that this greed affects children. Though he provides evidence for the claim that obesity rates have increased in young children, he does not provide hard evidence that greed is the cause of these rates.

Lastly, the author backs up his claim by referencing an American psychologist and his work, as well as giving a name to pathological greed. This helps to somewhat strengthen his argument near the end of the article.

Write your response to PART A, QUESTION 1 on this page only.

The author's argument in this document is  
"The large-scale General Survey of the  
United States found that, from the early 1970s  
to the late 1990s, the percentage of people  
who are very happy actually dropped from 34  
percent to 30 percent, despite higher incomes,  
more possessions and improved living standards."

Begin your response to PART A, QUESTION 2 on this page.

The author's line of reasoning to writing this is to show people why it's went down and how to fix it. Some of the evidence used to build the argument are when the author said "Such findings are being hailed by social critics as proof that the greed economy is toxic to well-being, and that it is hastening our slide into a collective state of unhappy consciousness as sociologists call it. I think this means that greed is one of the causes for the unhappiness. Also the author states that "They may be missing the main point if, indeed, greed is creating a deep existential void that cannot be filled—whatever the degree of material indulgence, personal achievement or private gratification."

Begin your response to **PART A, QUESTION 3** on this page.

The effectiveness of the evidence the author uses to support the claims he made in his argument is express how he feels about why people are becoming unhappy and what we can do to ensure that more and more people don't become unhappy. Also to explain how we can make people happy.

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**End-of-Course**  
**Short Answer**

**Overview**

- Q1. Responses to this question were expected to demonstrate the students' ability to accurately identify, in its entirety, the author's argument, main idea, or thesis. In this case, there were two primary components to the author's main idea: (1) Greed can stimulate the economy and (2) Greed can lead to poor health and unhappiness.
- Q2. Responses to this question were expected to demonstrate the students' ability to identify the claims the author uses to develop the argument's line of reasoning.
- Q3. Responses to this question were expected to demonstrate the students' ability to identify specific pieces of evidence the author uses and to assess that evidence in terms of relevance and credibility.

**Sample: A**

**Question 1 Score:** 3

**Question 2 Score:** 6

**Question 3 Score:** 6

**HIGH SAMPLE RESPONSE**

**R1**

The response earned a score of 3 because it identifies both parts of the author's main idea in that it acknowledges that greed "despite its benefit to the economy" does have a "detriment to human health."

**R2**

The response, from the first few sentences, acknowledges that "the connections follow the narrative of a changing American economy and address the consequences as they relate to the claim." The response identifies a variety of claims that support the main idea such as "economic demand has changed from a system where consumers had time to reflect to one of constant desire, or pure greed." The response then provides the connection to the previous claim in that "it explains why consumers are feeling dissatisfied." The response then provides another claim, acknowledging the connection to the main idea in that "it fuels investment." The response again acknowledges the connection: "it relates to the previous subclaim because it demonstrates how investors are reacting to increasing consumer greed." The response provides connection after connection – "introduce an opposite perspective" or "it connects to theme of declining health due to greed." This response earned a score of 6 for these reasons.

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**Short Answer**

**R3**

This response earned a score of 6 because its evaluation of the credibility and relevance of the evidence. The response follows the key pieces of evidence in each part of the article and states that “the subclaim is saved by the reference to the General Survey of the United States” in terms of relevance and then states “Credibility is not stated for the General Survey of the United States, but it at least has the suggestion of a national scope.” The response evaluates effectively again for the next piece of evidence when stating “again he is not well-known, but has the benefit of a professional title to save some credibility.”

**Sample: B**

**Question 1 Score:** 2

**Question 2 Score:** 4

**Question 3 Score:** 4

**MEDIUM SAMPLE RESPONSE**

**R1**

The response earned a score of 2 because it accurately identifies part of the main idea or argument with “greed present in today’s society is affecting overall happiness” but it does not include how greed fuels the economy, so it does not ascend to a score of 3.

**R2**

The response earned a score of 4 because it identifies the claim that “the greed economy is toxic to well-being” and “that greed has changed over time to become more potent,” and it explains the connections when stating that the author gives examples of “premature disposal” and “needless upgrading.” The response attempted to explain a line of reasoning when stating that the author “moves on by connecting this with effects of overconsumption.” However, the response did not identify enough claims accurately or explain a thorough line of reasoning necessary to earn a 6.

**R3**

The response earned a score of 4 because it identifies that the author uses evidence examples such as “evidence from the 1970’s and 1990’s” and evaluates the reliability by pointing out the “5-10 year gap between the then and the time the article was written.” The response also identifies that “obesity rates have risen in young children.” Additionally, response evaluates multiple sources and lack of evidence to elevate it to a score of 4. However, the response does not directly identify enough examples of evidence to elevate it to a score of 6.

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**Short Answer**

**Sample: C**

**Question 1 Score:** 1

**Question 2 Score:** 2

**Question 3 Score:** 2

**LOW SAMPLE RESPONSE**

**R1**

The response earned a score of 1 because it claims that a statistic/evidence (“large scale general study”) is the author’s main argument. While the quoted material does include the idea about a decline in happiness, there is no mention of greed, which is a component of each of the two main parts of the argument.

**R2**

This section of the response earned a score of 2 because it only accurately identifies “The greed economy is toxic to well-being & hastening slide into a collective state of unhappy consciousness” as a claim (mistakenly called evidence in the response).

**R3**

This response earned a score of 2. While the response does not identify specific evidence in section 3, the student does identify the claim from sociologists that “greed is creating a deep existential void” as evidence in section 2. This we count as identification of evidence for section 3. This is the minimal response possible to receive a score of 2.