2021

AP CollegeBoard

AP® Seminar End-of-Course Exam

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

Inside:

Part A

- ☑ **Scoring Guideline**
- ☑ **Student Samples**
- ☑ **Scoring Commentary**

End-of-Course Exam: Part A — 15 points

General Scoring Notes

- When applying the scoring guidelines, you should award the score according to the preponderance of evidence (i.e. best fit).
- Except where otherwise noted, each row is scored independently.

0 (Zero)
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.

Question 1: Argument, main idea or thesis — 3 points

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 1 **Understand and Analyze Argument** **(0-3 points)**	**0 points** Does not meet the criteria for one point.	**1 point** The response misstates the author's argument, main idea, or thesis.	**2 points** The response identifies, in part and with some accuracy, the author's argument, main idea, or thesis.	**3 points** The response accurately identifies the author's argument, main idea, or thesis.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: ● Are irrelevant to the argument (do not even relate to the topic or subject of the text).	**Typical responses that earn 1 point:** ● Misidentify the main argument or provide little or no indication of understanding of any part of the main argument. ● Just state the topic of the argument. ● Restate the title or heading.	**Typical responses that earn 2 points:** ● Accurately identify only part of the argument (part is omitted or is overgeneralized). ● Describe all parts, but either vaguely or with some inaccuracy.	**Typical responses that earn 3 points:** ● Correctly identify all of the main parts of the argument. ● Demonstrate understanding of the argument as a whole.
		Examples that earn 1 point: **Misidentify the main argument** ● *"Public libraries are outdated."* **Restate the title or heading** ● *"Public libraries matter."*	**Examples that earn 2 points** **Identify only part of the argument** ● *"Libraries are important because they provide resources like the internet for people that otherwise would not have access."* ● *"Libraries are falling apart because they are underfunded and so can't serve their important function."*	**Examples that earn 3 points:** **Include all parts of the argument** ● *"Failure to adequately support libraries undermines a fundamental democratic institution that bridges race and class divides and undercuts the financial health of communities."*
	Additional Notes **The Argument/thesis has three main parts:** 1. Public libraries are important social institutions. 2. Reductions in funding of public libraries need to be addressed/there has been a failure to adequately support them. 3. Public libraries are important resources for reasons of equity (bridging digital divide). **Scoring note:** Equity can refer to any of class/race/ex-criminal status/immigrants/poor. Responses must indicate a distinction between people who have access and who do not for this part.			

Question 2: Explain line of reasoning — 6 points

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 2 **Understand and Analyze Argument** **(0-6 points)**	**0 points** Does not meet the criteria for one point.	**2 points** The response correctly identifies at least one of the author's claims.	**4 points** 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.	**6 points** The response provides a thorough explanation of the author's line of reasoning by identifying relevant claims and clearly explaining connections among them.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: ● Do not identify any claims accurately.	**Typical responses that earn 2 points:** ● Accurately identify only one claim. OR ● Identify more than one claim, but make no reference to connections between them.	**Typical responses that earn 4 points:** ● Accurately identify some claims but there are some significant inaccuracies or omissions. ● Provide few or superficial connections between claims (demonstrating a limited understanding of the reasoning).	**Typical responses that earn 6 points:** ● Accurately identify most of the claims. AND ● Clearly explain the relationships between claims (including how they relate to the overall argument).
	Additional Notes ● A response may evaluate sources and evidence in the second part (Row 2), and/or analyze the argument in the third part (Row 3). Credit should be awarded for this. **Author's claims** 1. Libraries are essential social/democratic institutions – available to everyone (universal access). 2. There is inequality of access to technology/internet that libraries help bridge (i.e. digital divide). 3. America is starving its libraries, i.e. underfunding them. 4. Libraries are falling apart (poor infrastructure). 5. Libraries provide critical services (such as ESL programs, internet access, literacy programs) for all. 6. Inattention to libraries denies people access to basic necessities. Underfunding causes libraries to offer reduced hours, making them less accessible for working people. 7. Libraries add economic value to communities.			

Question 3: Evaluate effectiveness of the evidence — 6 points

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 3 **Evaluate Sources and Evidence** **(0-6 points)**	**0 points** Does not meet the criteria for one point.	**2 points** The response identifies little evidence. It makes a superficial reference to relevance and/or credibility but lacks explanation.	**4 points** The response explains various pieces of evidence in terms of credibility and relevance, but may do so inconsistently or unevenly.	**6 points** 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.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: ● Misidentify evidence or exclude evidence from the response. AND ● Provide no evaluative statement about effectiveness of evidence.	**Typical responses that earn 2 points:** ● Identify at least one piece of evidence but disregard how well it supports the claims. OR ● Offer broad statements about how well the evidence supports the argument without referencing ANY specific evidence.	**Typical responses that earn 4 points:** ● Provide a vague, superficial, or perfunctory assessment of how well at least two pieces of evidence support the argument. OR ● Explain the relevance and credibility of the evidence presented but explanations lack detail.	**Typical responses that earn 6 points:** ● Provide detailed evaluation of how well the evidence presented supports the argument by ● Evaluating the strengths and/or weaknesses of the evidence. AND ● Evaluating the relevance and credibility of the specific pieces of evidence presented.
	Additional Notes ● A response may evaluate sources and evidence in the second part (Row 2), and/or analyze the argument in the third part (Row 3). Credit should be awarded for this.			

Summary of Evidence

Source (as provided in text)	Credibility	Evidence/Relevance to claims
No Author	(No source)	More libraries than McDonalds *Provides context (ubiquitous) and supports claim they are important*
American Library Association	Relevant professional organization ***Possible bias:*** *Goal of promoting libraries*	Core principle "equity of access" *Reinforces claim that it's wrong to starve them of resources as it deprives people of basic information (access)*
2010 story by Chicago's Fox affiliate, "Are Libraries Necessary, or a Waste of Tax Money?"		(No content; just the title) *Counterclaim (libraries may be a waste of money) that the author responds to via Mary Dempsey's testimony*
Mary A Dempsey	Commissioner of the Chicago Public Library ***Possible bias:*** *professional interest in library funding*	Digital divide exists along lines of race/class, and 60% of users are searching or applying for jobs *Supports equity argumen*t
No Author	(No source)	NYC library funding 65 million down since 2008 Waiting lists One-third of city residents no internet access Queens library highest circulation rate of any library Brooklyn and Bronx libraries falling apart – request 1.4B funding (3 boroughs) Mayor pays only lip service to supporting libraries *Supporting claim of high demand/popularity and inadequate funding*
New York Times	Major media source (albeit an editorial)	People use libraries to learn English, hone resumes, use internet, etc. *This crosses the digital divide: equality of access*
No author	(No source)	Library hours are only 10 to 6, or even 1 to 6 *Suggests specific harm done by underfunding*
No source	(No source)	City of Philadelphia, when they spent money – home value rose which increased revenue from property taxes *Gives a new reason to support libraries: an argument from self-interest/economic benefits to communities.* ***Possible weakness:*** *correlation doesn't equal causation; doesn't provide justification for causal relationship*
"Other studies"	(No source)	Tax dollars return $2.38 – $6.54 per dollar spent *Argues that library funding is a good investment*

[Missing evidence/possible	N/A	*No mention of library services in suburban and rural areas; limited scope*

Write your response to PART A, QUESTION 1 on this page only. Do not skip lines.

The author's main argument is that although libraries are threatened by lack of funding, they are integral parts of the American social fabric by bridging the vast digital divide (how many marginalized communities don't have access to the internet), through striving for "equity of access."

Begin your response to PART A, QUESTION 2 on this page. Do not skip lines.

Hewel makes many claims to support her argument that libraries are integral parts of the American social fabric. Hewel starts her argument by stating the major problem of American society, the "vast digital divide." She explains how marginalized communities suffer from unequal access to resources in comparison to their affluent counterparts. Hewel cites a quote from Dempsey to exemplify and support her claim. This claim of the "vast digital divide" ties back to why libraries are essential institutions in our communities - because they are able to bridge that divide by making technological devices and literature accessible to many marginalized communities. Another claim Hewel discusses in her argument is the issue of lack of funding for these libraries. She explains how as a result of lack of funding many libraries resemble "subway stations than literary oases." This is a grave issue because libraries are striving to bridge the divide between marginalized and privledged communities and failing to do so through the lack of resources and funding. They are becoming unable to achieve this societal demand as a result of monetary deficits. Hewel then explains a counter argument one may make, "that the culpit of the digital divide are "sticky connections or malfunctioning

Continue your response to PART A, QUESTION 2 on this page. Do not skip lines.

severs". Hewel refutes this claim by stating that many of these marginalized communities (eg., people of color, immigrants, recently released from prison, of low economic standpoint) solely rely on these resources provided to them by the library. Thus it would support her previous claim that lack of monetary funding poses a grave issue by exemplifying all the implications of that monetary deficit; marginalized communities would be denied access to learning english, job-searching, reading literature all as a result of the lack of funding. Hewel makes the final claim that libraries are viable for economic reasons for sustaining communities and economies. She exemplifies by citing how studies have shown how for every tax dollar put into a library, communities receive anywhere from $2.38 to $6.54 in return. This supports her argument that libraries are integral aspects of American society by not only bridging the "vast digital divide" by also serving as economically supportive to surrounding communities, thus tieing back to her thesis.

Write your response to **PART A, QUESTION 3** on this page only. Do not skip lines.

Flewel cites many sources to support her thesis and claims that libraries are integral parts of American society. Flewel starts off by citing how in america there are more library buildings than McDonald's restaurants, serving as a hook to her argument. this evidence proves effective to get the reader's attention and focus for the rest of her argument. the second evidence she uses is the 2010 story by Dempsey explaining how many individuals who go to libraries are in search for jobs and use public computers. She uses a credible, but biased source since Dempsey is the commissioner of the Chicago public library, thus she would naturally support Flewel's argument. However this evidence proves effective in supporting Flewel's argument by demonstrating the many uses of public libraries and how they help bridge the "vast digital divide." Another evidence Flewel uses is how in New York citing funding has gone done $15 million from 2008, resulting libraries to resemble "subway stating [rather] than literary oases]." This evidence effectively supports her argument by stating how the lack of funding poses a serious problem on the survival of these library branches and how that directly impacts marginalized communities' access to technological & literary resources. However Flewel uses lack of citations to support evidence given and fails to use compelling evidence to support her argument such as when she says

Continue your response to **PART A, QUESTION 3** on this page. Do not skip lines.

"the New York times editorial last month" or "Other studies have demonstrated that for every take dollar [...]." Although the information given after this is useful and relevant to her argument it lacks citation and thus lacks credibility. As a result of the author failing to establish credibility in some of her citations, it detracts from the evidence used in her argument because it fails to effectively support her main argument: that libraries are integral parts of american society. Despite that some of Hereveli's citation and evidence lacked credibility, the overall use of her information was credible and reliable and effectively supported her main argument that libraries are threated despite being major factors of American communities, through the use of effective and relevant evidence.

Write your response to PART A, QUESTION 1 on this page only. Do not skip lines.

The author's thesis in "Why Public Libraries Matter" is America is neglecting its libraries, which cuts off millions of people from accessing information, which powers the development and basic functions of society.

Begin your response to **PART A, QUESTION 2** on this page. Do not skip lines.

The article "Why Public Libraries Matter" by Katrina vanden Heuvel (2015) discusses the idea that by neglecting our libraries, we are denying people information that is crucial to the development and basic functions of society. The author first uses the claim that libraries are crucial to helping the public search for, and apply for jobs. The author also states that "Queens Library... loaned out 15.7 million items during the 2014 fiscal year...", but even though libraries are so popular and used, they are falling apart and need funding. It is also shown that internet is not readily available ~~to choose~~ at all times to some who need it, so the library is the hub where people can get that access. Lastly, the author claims that libraries benefit the home values of the neighborhoods they are in, so it's crucial to continue to support them. All in all, the claims are connected through the benefits that the libraries have on the community.

Write your response to PART A, QUESTION 3 on this page only. Do not skip lines.

In the article "Why Public Libraries Matter" by Katrina vanden Heuvel (2015), the author explains the benefits that public libraries have and the positive impact they have on their communities. The author uses a percentage to solidify the fact that libraries help the public search and apply for jobs, but the percentage is not backed by any study, just hearsay from the Commissioner of Chicago. Then, the author uses the fact that "2.8 million people" do not have access to internet in New York City to back the fact that libraries need funding because people are relying on them, but this number is not backed by any kind of source making it unreliable. For the claim that New Yorkers are not always able to obtain internet access, their is no source cited besides the previous one. Lastly, for the claim that libraries bring up the value of the neighborhoods they are in, their is no reliable source that claims that libraries brought up the property values in Philadelphia, so they'll bring New York Cities up too.

Write your response to **PART A, QUESTION 1** on this page only. Do not skip lines.

The authors argument in this article is how libraries are bad for America. In New York City's public libraries funding was down $65 million. This is because about 2.8 million people do not have internet service in their home, so they go to the public library. Moving on into the city of Philadelphia, they had spent $33 million on public libraries, including about $12 million of private donations. The article then states "for every tax dollar that libraries take in, communities recieve anywhere between $2.38 and $6.54 in return". For that sentence that I have just stated is why the author thinks that its not bad to starve our librares.

Begin your response to **PART A, QUESTION 2** on this page. Do not skip lines.

The first claim that the author stated was in the second paragraph, that one article has said. The article was named "Are Libraries Necessary or a waste of Tax money?! The author of this article ~~continues~~ continuse to talk about how lines of race and class that still exist. They then go on to talk about how 60 percent of individuals who use the public computers at the Chicago's libraries, for searching for jobs. But then, the article then states how the 19th-century-era, could find jobs ~~for~~ in newspapers, The next topic was how in the New York City's library's funding was down $15 million even when the service is thriving. About 2.8 million people do not have access to ~~an~~ any type of internet, so they go to the library. Lastly, In the City of Philadelphia, spent aproxamently $33 million on public libraries, plus additionaly $12 million more dollars due to private donations. The public libraries contributed $698 million to home values, which then added $18.5 million in property taxes for the city and school district. In conclusion, all of these claims have lead to one thing, that many individuals are not using the library to learn anything off of books, they are mostly there just to be on the computer, and seeing what they are missing out in the outside world.

Write your response to **PART A, QUESTION 3** on this page only. Do not skip lines.

There are many evidences in this article already. Here are the main evidence that stands out in ~~this~~ article. In the second ~~para~~ paragraph it states ~~that~~ another article "Are libraries Necessary or a waste of tax money" the article states that race and class is bridged constantly and ~~eq~~ equitably though the free acess provided by the Chicago Public library." About 60 percent of the individuals are using the libraries computers to search for jobs, etc. In the 19-century-era Catalogs, and newspapers were there to show people what jobs are opened. Moving on, ~~In~~ in the New York City libraries funding is down to $65 million. About One-third of the New York city residents (2.8 million people) ~~are~~ do not have access to Internet in thier home. So, with that being said many people dont go to the library to read, they mostly go just to go to the computers to find job that are relevant for that particular person. Lastly, in the city of Philadelphia they had spent around $33 million on public libraries, not including the $12 million of the private donations. Other Studies have then stated that for every ~~one~~ dollar that libraries take in, the communities take in between $2.38 and $6.54 in return. With all of this evidence it is not awful to starve our libraries, because ~~never~~ nobody ever use the books anymore they all just stay online, because nobody really has a desire for books anymore.

End-of-Course Exam
Part A: Short Answer

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

This task asked students to read and understand an argument, explain the line of reasoning and evaluate the credibility and relevance of the evidence advanced by the author in support of that argument.

Sample: A
Score: 3
Score: 6
Score: 6

Row 1: Understand and Analyze Argument
The response earned **3** points because it accurately identifies all parts of the author's main argument: 1) libraries are "threatened by lack of funding," 2) they are an "integral part of the American social fabric," and 3) they "bridg[e] the vast digital divide (how many marginalized communities don't have access to the internet) through striving for 'equity of access.'"

Row 2: Understand and Analyze Argument
The response earned **6** points because it accurately identifies most of the author's claims, as well as explains how these claims are connected to each other and the author's main argument. The response begins by identifying the claim "the major problem of American society, the 'vast digital divide.'" This claim is tied back to the overall argument when the response explains "why libraries are essential institutions in our communities – because they are able to bridge that divide…" The response goes on to identify a counterargument anticipated by the author, "that the culprit of the digital divide are [sic] "sticky connections or malfunctioning servers." The response then explains how the author refutes this: "many of these marginalized communities…solely rely on these resources provided to them by the library." This idea is immediately linked to the author's previous claim about funding. The response identifies a final claim that "libraries are viable for economic reasons for sustaining communities and economies" and explains how this connects back the author's overall thesis ("this supports her argument…by not only bridging the 'vast digital divide' by also serving as economically supportive to surrounding communities.") The response not only explains how the author crafts the argument (e.g., recognition of counterarguments and refutations), but also makes clear connections between claims and the overall argument.

Row 3: Evaluate Sources and Evidence
The response earned **6** points because it provides a detailed evaluation of the evidence used to support the author's main argument. The response evaluates strengths and weaknesses of the evidence, for example, when it recognizes that the author uses "a credible, but biased source since Dempsey is the commissioner of the Chicago Public Library, thus she would naturally support Heuvel's argument," but acknowledges the effectiveness of the evidence in "demonstrating the many uses of public libraries and how they help bridge the 'vast digital divide.'" Further evaluation is shown when the response notes that "Heuval [sic] uses lack of citations to support evidence given and fails to use compelling evidence to support her argument when she says 'The *New York Times* editorial last month' or 'other studies have demonstrated...'" The response evaluates multiple pieces of evidence in detail: it acknowledges the author's use of relevant information to support the overall argument but also discusses in-depth how a lack of citations poses a threat to credibility in many instances.

End-of-Course Exam
Part A: Short Answer

Sample: B
Score: 2
Score: 4
Score: 4

Row 1: Understand and Analyze Argument
The response earned **2** points because it accurately identifies part of the author's argument: 1) libraries are important to society, and 2) America is neglecting its libraries. While this response mentions that neglecting libraries cuts off millions of people from accessing information, it does not address that libraries are important for reasons of equity (that some people have access and some do not), nor does it identify any specific disenfranchised groups. Thus, the response does not identify all the main parts of the author's argument.

Row 2: Understand and Analyze Argument
The response earned **4** points because it accurately identifies a number of claims, but the majority of the response provides only superficial connections between them (for example: "the author first uses the claim," "it is also shown that," and "lastly, the author claims.") In the last sentence, however, the response states: "All in all, the claims are connected through the benefits that the libraries have on the community." In this sentence there is a connection made between the claims and the overall argument, moving the student out of the 2-point column and into the 4-point column. It does not achieve 6 points because the connections and explanation of the line of reasoning are not thorough or detailed but mostly limited to that one final sentence.

Row 3: Evaluate Sources and Evidence
The response earned **4** points in this row because while it does explain several pieces of evidence and how they are related to claims, it does not explain relevance, nor does it provide consistent detail about *why* the evidence used by the author strengthens or weakens the argument. For example, the response notes, "For the claim that New Yorkers are not always able to obtain internet access, their [sic] is no source cited besides the previous one." This level of evaluation lacks detail and specificity (e.g., the vague reference to "the previous one"). The response also notes that "the author uses a percentage to solidify the fact that libraries help the public search and apply for jobs." However, the response then goes on to label this percentage (from the Chicago Commissioner) as "heresay" as it is not from a study, indicating a misunderstanding of how the evidence is used. Overall the discussion of evidence primarily focuses on how claims are supported by evidence and only superficially addresses relevance, strengths, and/ or weaknesses.

End-of-Course Exam
Part A: Short Answer

Sample: C
Score: 1
Score: 2
Score: 2

Row 1: Understand and Analyze Argument
The response earned **1** point. It misstates the author's argument twice by stating that "the argument in this article is how libraries are bad for America" and "the author thinks that it's not bad to starve our libraries." While the response partially addresses one part of the author's main argument, "funding," it cannot earn a medium score of 2 because it misidentifies the main argument.

Row 2: Understand and Analyze Argument
The response earned **2** points. It identifies one claim: that libraries provide internet access. It partially addresses the claim that America is starving its libraries ("New York City's library's funding was down $65 million even when the service is thriving") but fails to reflect an understanding of where that point connects to the overall argument. The response lists pieces of evidence rather than identify claims. This response also scores low because there are no connections between the claims, but instead simplistic transition words ("the author continues," "they then go on to talk about," "the next topic was," and "lastly"). Even with the superficial connections used, the explanations are inaccurate or faulty. For example, the response ends with "In conclusion, all of these claims had led to one thing" - then misstates the author's conclusion.

Row 3: Evaluate Sources and Evidence
The response earned **2** points. Although the response identifies specific pieces of evidence, it fails to demonstrate how that evidence supports the author's claims. It also misidentifies the claims themselves, e.g., "nobody really has a desire for books anymore." Additionally, the response notes that the article cites "studies" such as those that claim "for every dollar that libraries take in, the communities take between $2.38 and $6.45 in return," but misinterprets that evidence, and thus does not accurately link this evidence to a claim, nor assess credibility or relevance. Overall, this response scores low because it does not evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the evidence or demonstrate an understanding of how the author uses the evidence.