

**2006 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

Question 3

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

From talk radio to television shows, from popular magazines to Web blogs, ordinary citizens, political figures, and entertainers express their opinions on a wide range of topics. Are these opinions worthwhile? Does the expression of such opinions foster democratic values?

Write an essay in which you take a position on the value of such public statements of opinion, supporting your view with appropriate evidence.

A Guide to Holistic Scoring

1. Once you have internalized the scoring guide, read for an impression of the whole paper and score immediately. Do not reread or analyze.
2. Read the entire paper. The writing sometimes improves dramatically as the writer continues, and it sometimes falls apart after the opening paragraph.
3. Read supportively. Try to reward what is done well, rather than search for small errors or omissions.
4. Take everything in the paper into account: content, organization, diction, sentence structure, spelling—everything.
5. Try to ignore handwriting. If the handwriting is too illegible to permit a rapid, holistic reading, give the paper to your Table Leader who will, if necessary, give the paper to the Question Leader.
6. Do not judge a paper by its length. Some short papers are good, and some long papers are poor.
7. Remember that the use of a literary example does not make an argument inherently better than a paper that uses examples from other sources.
8. Use the full scale; in the papers to be scored, there will be “1” and “9” papers.
9. Remember that each score category represents a range (a high “3,” a solid “3,” and a low “3,” for example).
10. Remember that each paper is essentially a first draft written under stressful test conditions in a limited amount of time.
11. Remember that an unfinished, but developed, paper should not be penalized for lacking a conclusion.
12. Remember that the “9” paper need not be a polished or perfect essay.
13. Remember that any paper that addresses the topic is considered on topic and should be scored. A paper should not be penalized for a tangential/unusual approach to the topic. It should be scored on its own merits and on the logic of its argument developed in response to the topic as the writer interprets it.
14. Remember that the standards are set by consensus. Individual Readers are expected to accept and follow those standards, setting aside their individual or local scoring standards.
15. Remember that to the writer of the paper, the ideas expressed are fresh and original.
16. Unlike the Readers, the writer has not already read a hundred papers that begin just like the one currently being not already scored.

Scoring Guide for 2006 AP English Language and Composition Exam, Question 3

General Directions: This scoring guide will be useful for most of the essays you read. If it seems inappropriate for a specific essay, ask your Table Leader for assistance. Always show your Table Leader books that seem to have no response or that contain responses that seem unrelated to the question. Do not assign a score of 0 or – without this consultation.

Your score should reflect your judgment of the essay's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 40 minutes to read and write; the essay, therefore, is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards 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 your holistic evaluation of an essay's overall quality. In no case should you score an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics higher than a 2.

9 Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for 8 essays and, in addition, offer more sophisticated evidence or demonstrate particularly impressive control of language.

8 Effective

Essays earning a score of 8 respond to the prompt by **effectively** taking a position on the value of public statements of opinion and developing that position with especially appropriate evidence. 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 offer more complete support or demonstrate a more mature prose style.

6 Adequate

Essays earning a score of 6 respond to the prompt by **adequately** taking a position on the value of public statements of opinion and developing that position with appropriate evidence. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

5 Essays earning a score of 5 take a position on the value of public statements of opinion and support that position with evidence. These essays may, however, provide uneven, inconsistent, or limited arguments and/or evidence. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the writer's ideas.

4 Inadequate

Essays earning a score of 4 respond to the prompt **inadequately**. They take a position on the value of public statements of opinion, but the evidence is insufficient. The prose generally conveys the writer'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 taking a position on the value of public statements of opinion and supporting that position with appropriate evidence. The essays may show less control of writing.

2 Little Success

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in taking a position on the value of public statements of opinion and supporting that position with appropriate evidence. These essays may misunderstand the prompt or substitute a simpler task by responding to the prompt tangentially with unrelated, inaccurate, inappropriate, or no 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, 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.