

**2020**

**AP**  CollegeBoard

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# **AP<sup>®</sup> English Language and Composition**

Sample Student Responses - Packet 2

Rhetorical Analysis Question - Kennedy

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Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)  
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**Sample A**

[1] Many Americans admired Kennedy and his administration when he was in the White House. He was a loved man. Many share in fond memories of Kennedy up until his death, when the nation grieved for him. In this speech, Ronald Reagan uses the appeal to pathos with emotional tones, a common love for one's country and president, and an admiring tone in order to achieve his goal of raising money to create an endowment to found a new museum in honor of John F. Kennedy.

[2] Throughout the speech, Ronald Reagan uses the rhetorical device of pathos to connect emotionally with his audience. In paragraph 10, Reagan reminds his audience of the grief that the people of America and the world felt when Kennedy was mercilessly assassinated. He reminds the audience that, "when he died, when that comet disappeared over the continent, a whole nation grieved and would not forget" (para. 10). He compares Kennedy to a comet in this sentence to show that he was a person that people were to be in awe of. Kennedy did great things for the world and provided light for the world in the way that a comet flying over a dark night sky, would provide a beautiful light for the people lucky enough to witness the comet. Kennedy was that light in the world. In the rest of the paragraph, Reagan provides examples of people across the globe mourning the loss of Kennedy. He provides examples of people mourning in Brazil, the Congo, and Warsaw to show the profound affect that Kennedy had on not just the Americans, but the whole world. This use of pathos and the appeal to emotion proves to be effective for Reagan as it demonstrates to the people what affect Kennedy had on the world. This use of rhetoric allows the people to ask themselves, if Kennedy and his death had this affect on people all over the world, then why would a library and museum not be constructed in his honor? It is only logical that a man who changed the lives of people everywhere be remembered by the world, let alone his country. When people hear of the mourning that occurred after the death of Kennedy, they are more inclined to donate money to an endowment that will make this possible.

[3] Reagan also appeals to people by using a common love for one's country and president throughout his speech to show people that all of the love people had for Kennedy must be put into an acceptable way to remember him. In the sixth paragraph of the speech, Reagan captures the patriotism that was shown by Kennedy throughout his life. He makes a reference to a previous speech of Kennedy's from his inauguration when Kennedy proclaimed to the country to, "Ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country." This quote that Reagan reminds the audience of is a well-known quote from Kennedy, where his patriotism is shown as he is willing to do whatever it takes to serve his country, and reminding the audience that because Kennedy would do whatever he had to do for the United States of America, they must do whatever it takes to build the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. The incorporation of the "ask not" quote also shows the amount of people that trusted and followed

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Kennedy and what he told them. Reagan provided a deeper insight into the quote when informing the audience that many people who had heard that speech given by Kennedy at his inaugural address now work in the White House serving their country. Reagan demonstrates his own love for Kennedy in the seventh paragraph as he reveals to the audience that he did not love Kennedy when they were opponents, but after the fact he was able to respect Kennedy. This goes to show that even people who did not favor Kennedy were still able to see his courage and commitment to his country, warranting the construction of a library and museum in his name. Paragraph 10 also demonstrates the closeness and love that people felt for President Kennedy as a New Yorker put a sign on his door to close his business after the death of Kennedy that read, "Closed because of a death in the family" (para. 10). Kennedy was similar to a family member for many people. He was the person who cared for them when no one else did. This love for Kennedy is what led to his election to the President of the United States of America. People often remember those that they love in many ways. From a funeral, to burying them, to cremations and placing the urn upon the mantle on the fireplace, family members will do anything to remember those that they love who have passed. Most families in the world are not able to remember their loved ones through a library and museum in their honor, but when everyone in the country shares a common loved one, who passed through a tragic event, people are willing to give money to support the library and museum for President Kennedy.

[4] Although the Reagan was the opponent of Kennedy, at the time of this speech, he had learned to admire Kennedy for his patriotism and intelligence. Reagan reminds the people of this intelligence in the fifth paragraph as he speaks of a book that Kennedy had written as a young man that dealt with the subject of Hitler's rise to power. Someone as intelligent as Kennedy should not be someone that should be forgotten as Reagan is trying to remind people with the creation of an endowment. Reagan also admired Kennedy for his sense of humour that, "could leave his audience weak with laughter" (para. 4). A man that brought so much joy to people's lives should be able to bring the same joy even after his death, as Reagan is trying to communicate to his audience when he advocates for the installment of an endowment through his presence at the fundraising event and his speech. This joy that Kennedy brought to people in his lifetime can be brought to people after his death as Reagan wants people to recognize by donating money to keep the library and museum running. Reagan's admiring tone is ultimately to remind the people of how much others admired Kennedy and they could continue to admire him by talking a walk through his museum or reading about his administration in the library.

[5] Throughout the speech Reagan was able to connect with his audience and receive support to create an endowment and found the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. His speech brought back fond memories for the American people that convinced them to donate to an endowment to support and fund the library and museum. Reagan's efforts proved to be successful as the library and museum are still open today. Through Reagan's use of

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pathos and emotion, reminding the people of a common love for one's country and president, and an admiring tone towards Kennedy, he was able to secure the funds to support the library and museum in Kennedy's honor. Through this speech, Ronald Reagan was able to remind people of the good times and laughs that Kennedy brought them and use those memories to gain support to pay tribute to Kennedy through the support of his library and museum.

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**Sample B**

[1] President John F. Kennedy was one of the youngest, most shortly lived presidents in American history. In the June of 1985, the presidential library and museum named for him held a fundraising event attended by friends, family, and president Ronald Reagan to create an endowment to fund and support the presidential library. President Ronald Reagan employs parallelism and metaphor in his address to similar mourners of John F. Kennedy to create a reverent tone which he uses to pay his tribute to a great man taken too soon.

[2] The rule of three is a supremely efficient tool in the manipulation of human emotion. There is little else more satisfying to human ears than the final third repetition or part of a phrase. All presidents are known for having taken advantage of this ability, and President Ronald Reagan is known for having been a great speaker. In his description of Kennedy's contradictory qualities, Reagan describes him as being "[S]elf-deprecating yet proud, ironic yet easily moved, highly literary yet utterly at home with the common speech of the ordinary man". Reagan wields parallelism of the same phrase three times, giving his words a certain weight that only a triple employment of parallelism can achieve, to influence his audience into a respectful, mournful state. Similarly, he repeats his assertion of parallelism in the rule of three in his description of "As a leader, as a president, he seemed to have a good, hard, unillusioned understanding of man and his political choices". In his acknowledgement of Kennedy's position and abilities, Reagan paints a picture of solemnity and respect from one great man of high position to another, wielding parallelism for a conducive, satisfactory flow to his words. In his closing paragraphs, when portraying the mourning of a nation upon Kennedy's death, he finally states that his predecessor was "[S]omeone essentially, quintessentially, completely American". In this conclusionary honoring of Kennedy's character, Reagan satisfactorily conveys to his audience his overwhelming respect for Kennedy, and his shared and relatable grief, all accomplished through creating a reverent tone through parallelism.

[3] As grand a speaker as Ronald Reagan was, he was an expert in the field of comparison. Reagan knew that, although he was highly educated, many of Kennedy's supporters were not - and a highly favored way to breed understanding between two unlike parties, is comparison, especially metaphor. When sharing the amount of respect Reagan has for Kennedy, Reagan is forced to admit in his political opposition of the other man; however, knowing that those unknowing of the complicated world of politics would not understand, he compares their relationship to when "[T]he battle's over and the ground is cooled, well, it's then that you see the opposing general's valor". Through his direct comparison of a political competition to a war, his listeners could comprehend the amount of respect he held for Kennedy. For although not everyone understands the working minds of politicians, the valor of those who fight on a battle ground and the respect shared between them is well known since childhood, when we are weaned on fairy tales of knights and chivalry. In a repeating description of Kennedy, Reagan compares him to an otherworldly entity by saying "And when he died, when that comet disappeared over the continent, a whole nation grieved and would

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not forget". All people, no matter where they hail from, hold a reverence for space. Through his direct comparison of Kennedy to a comet, Reagan is displaying his reverence obviously to the common people. And again, when at the end of his speech discussing history, he compares it to a "[G]reat house", and Kennedy to "[M]usic" which "[P]lays on". In this comparison, Reagan finally reveals his overwhelming respect and reverence for Kennedy by comparing him to a significant part of history which will live on forever.

[4] President Ronald Reagan employs parallelism and metaphor in his address to similar mourners of John F. Kennedy to create a reverent tone which he uses to pay his tribute to a great man taken too soon.

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**Sample C**

[1] In Ronald Reagan’s speech at the dedication of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (1985), he asserts that the late President Kennedy was an admirable and patriotic man who wanted what was best for his country. His usage of metaphors, contradicting descriptions, and quotations from other pieces help him to coherently describe Kennedy’s complex character as well as his accomplishments as President. Reagan’s purpose in his dedication speech is to pay tribute to the late President in order to remind American citizens of the ideas Kennedy embodied as President. He develops a relaxed and almost casual relationship with his audience, the American citizens as well as world leaders who may have been watching his speech, through a reflective and impersonal tone.

[2] In the first lines of his speech, Reagan says that he had been thinking more of Kennedy himself than of the library being dedicated. Reagan goes on to describe his character and its complexity through the use of many contradicting descriptions. This is most clearly evident in his second paragraph, as he uses phrases such as “self-deprecating yet proud”, “ironic yet easily moved”, and “highly literary yet utterly at home with the common speech of the ordinary man”. By giving insight to Kennedy’s personality and character, Reagan is able to show the American people that he was not just a President, but he was also someone many of them could relate to. This forces the people to see past his actions as President and respect him for what he was besides the title. Reagan’s usage of metaphors to describe how Kennedy thought also helps to put in perspective his relatability. His assertion, “He seemed to grasp from the beginning that life is one fast moving train, and you have to jump aboard and hold on to your hat and relish the sweep of the wind as it rushes by” is just one example of this. By using a metaphor, he tells Americans that he was a man with similar ideals many of them possessed. The idea of living in the moment and living fast is something that many Americans live by, and by showing them that Kennedy thought the same way, he is able to attest to his patriotism and relatability as a man, not necessarily as a President.

[3] Reagan also attributes to President Kennedy by citing quotes from other pieces of work. In his third paragraph he attests to Kennedy’s love for history and provides an example of what was presumably one of his favorite historical poems,

“The aide-de-camp knew certain lines of Greek  
And other such unnecessary things  
... that are good for peace  
But are not deemed so serviceable for war.”

This poem is another tactic Reagan uses to pay tribute to Kennedy and make the American people aware of his character. The poem is seen as something the people can “share” in a sense with the President. Reagan presents something that some people might share with the late leader: the love of history and poetry. Reagan also pays tribute to Kennedy’s infamous speech in which he says, “Ask not

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what your country can do for you --- ask what you can do for your country.” This quote serves as a reminder of what Kennedy stood for as President and the ideals he wanted his citizens to live by. It reminds Americans of the Presidential side of him in contrast to the aforementioned relatable side to him.

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**Sample D**

[1] John F. Kennedy was one of America's great presidents who left a legacy on the world before he was assassinated in 1963. He was a very charismatic and charming leader, who warmed his citizen's hearts throughout his candidacy for president. In honor of his legacy, The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum was built to remember his fond memories as head of the country. President Ronald Reagan gave a touching speech at the fundraising event to pay tribute to the former president. Reagan used powerful diction, playful anecdotes, and used Kennedy's credibility to enhance his speech about him.

[2] President Reagan used quality language to make his speech more memorable and effective. The use of eloquent writing really left a mark on his citizen's hearts as they listened to him pay tribute to JFK. Reagan did an excellent job portraying the great man that Kennedy was, "...he could sum up a current statesman with an earthly epithet that could leave his audience weak with laughter" (Reagan, 4). The lighthearted words the president used created a smile upon the faces of his audience. They are more susceptible to listen and contribute to the fundraiser if what they are hearing are pleasant things. Reagan also used metaphors to magnify his speech. He described Kennedy's attitude towards life as if "he seemed to grasp from the beginning that life is one fast moving train, and you have to jump aboard and hold on to your hat and relish the swipe of the wind as it rushes by" (Reagan 10). The President used his intelligence to help his listeners better understand his message. His use of a metaphor created an encouraging visual image for his audience to picture, which inspired his listeners to donate to the library.

[3] Ronald Reagan also used high spirited anecdotes to intensify his speech for the JFK fundraiser. Throughout his speech Reagan quotes many things Kennedy enjoyed. He wanted to make his speech seem more personal by describing the things that JFK was fond of, for example, "He loved history and approached it as both romantic and realist. He could quote Stephen Vincent Benet on General Lee's Army" (Reagan 3). By telling the audience something unique about President Kennedy's personal life, it shows that the two presidents had a close bond. The spectators are more likely to be affected by a speech delivered by a friend, than a stranger. Reagan's incorporation of tales John F. Kennedy's life helped to bring his speech to an intimate level. Because of this, his audience is more likely to support the presidential library.

[4] Finally, Reagan used President Kennedy's credibility to make his speech more powerful. He used a combination of pathos and ethos to get through to his listeners. Reagan narrated certain aspects of JFK's life like how "We know from his many friends and colleagues--we know in part from the testimony available at the library--that he was self-deprecating yet proud, ironic yet easily moved, highly literary yet utterly one with the common speech of an ordinary man" (Reagan 2). As Reagan describes how positive and charming JFK was the crowd's hearts are filled with bittersweet emotions. This shows that President Kennedy was a great man towards everyone he encountered. By revealing

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that he was a righteous man, the audience is more open to really taking Reagan's speech to heart. President Ronald also expresses JFK as a man of the people because "He was a patriot who summoned patriotism from the heart of a sated country...he cared that his country would be safe" (Reagan 7). Ronald Reagan used more of an ethos approach with this quote by stating how much love he had for his country and people. This gave credibility to Kennedy because it showed how qualified he was to be the President of the United States. People are more willing to fund a library dedicated to a certified leader.

[5] President Ronald Reagan used mighty diction, personal anecdotes, and used Kennedy's credibility to strengthen the speech about him. His persuasive wording amplified his ability to get through to his audience. Reagan's use of playful stories gave his speech a more personal feel. Lastly, the president used ethos so the spectators would be more susceptible to take his speech into real consideration. He wanted to move his citizens while honoring the assassinated president, John F. Kennedy. The rhetorical techniques he used really enhanced his speech, which increased the chance of getting through to his audience. With a great speech he was about to pay tribute to JFK, while encouraging the listeners to fund and support the presidential library.

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**Sample E**

[1] President Ronald Reagan met the Kennedy family at a fundraising event to help the Kennedy Library foundation create a fund to support the presidential library. He presents a speech to the population attending this fundraiser to pay tribute to John F. Kennedy. In his attempt to do so, Ronald Reagan uses rhetorical devices to achieve his purpose of his speech and make it as effective and heart warming as possible to his audience as well as the Kennedy family. The rhetorical devices used by Reagan to achieve his purpose of his speech of paying tribute to John F. Kennedy are Atmosphere, Imagery, and Apostrophe.

[2] Ronald Reagan uses the rhetorical device atmosphere to achieve the purpose of his speech. He uses this rhetorical device to create a general emotional mood of his entire speech. By recognizing the Kennedy library not for the library in itself but for John F. Kennedy, the man himself. He brings it back to the man who started it all and what he stood for. Reagan states in paragraph two “ He was a writer who could expound with ease on the moral forces that shaped John Calhoun's political philosophy, on the other hand, he possessed a most delicate and refined appreciation for Boston's political wards...”. This brings back to many people memories of a great loss. Reagan uses this atmosphere to get his audience to feel what he is feeling while also creating a tone to help his audience remember the man who stands for this library. Ronald Reagan reaches his goal for his purpose using atmosphere to pay tribute to JFK but he also achieves that goal with Imagery.

[3] Imagery is used by Ronald Reagan to achieve his purpose of his speech. He creates a picture for us of this man to show us an honorable man and communicate his success. In paragraph 10 he states, “ I think that's how his country remembers him, in his joy... when he died, when that comet disappeared over the continent, a whole nation grieved and would not forget.” This creates the audience to remember JFK's death. It also sparks the reader to envision the comet disappearing and seeing his nation grieve. Reagan used this to spark emotion to remember what John F. Kennedy stood for and what an impact his death had on not only his family but the nation. President Ronald Reagan used Imagery to achieve his purpose of his speech by putting a picture in his audience's head of the man JFK was.

[4] Reagan lastly uses apostrophe to achieve his purpose of his speech. He addresses the man himself in his entirety and says his personality and what makes him a great person as well as president.

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**Sample F**

[1] Reagan wanted to give a strong argument to pay tribute to JFK. He use multiple rhetorical devices to make his speech better. In the article, Reagan uses a paradox and an analogy to show Kennedy's value.

[2] To begin with, in the first paragraph, Reagan talks about how John F Kennedy was many things, he says "He was self-deprecating, yet proud". This is a paradox because he is contradicting everything he says about Kennedy. By doing this, he means to explains that he has many things that make him a great man. He is a little bit of everything which is what makes him special.

[3] To further continue, in the 8th paragraph, Reagan says, "But you know it's true: when the battle's over and the ground is cool, well it's then that you see the opposing generals' valor". He is using an analogy to explain how we did not take the time to appreciate who he was, until he was gone.

[4] Overall, Reagan uses specific rhetorical devices to give a strong argument to the public about Kennedy's tribute and what it stands for.

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**Sample G**

[1] In the speech that Reagan made he uses Anaphora and Analogy in it. The use of these devices makes the writing more interesting. This makes the way a speech more interesting than than knowing what they are saying, finding what they are trying to say is much more intriguing.

[2] When Regan is describing how Kennedy is he uses Anaphora in his speech. In the second paragraph he says "That he was self-deprecating yet proud, ironic yet easily moved, highly literary yet utterly at home with the common speech of the ordinary man." When using yet in each sentence he he makes it shown that he was all of those words. Using yet repeatedly makes a better understanding on how Anaphora is used to honor Kennedy in his speech.

[3] In the tenth paragraph he uses Analogy to describe Kennedy's way of life. He says "Everything we saw him do seemed to betray a huge enjoyment of life, he seemed to grasp from the beginning that life is one fast moving truth," He is comaning his life like a train ride and you have to enjoy your time. Using Analogy makes the story of Kennedy more lively.

[4] In the speech he uses Anaphora + Analogy to pay tribute to Kennedy to make a more appreciated way by using in his speeches.