

## Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2022 AP<sup>®</sup> Seminar Free-Response Questions

• Number of Students Scored	56,766		
• Number of Readers	910		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	6,607	11.6
	4	10,892	19.2
	3	29,392	51.8
	2	6,706	11.8
	1	3,169	5.6
• Global Mean	3.19		

The following comments on the 2022 free-response questions for AP<sup>®</sup> Seminar were written by the Chief Reader, Alice Hearst, Professor of Government, Smith College, Northampton, MA. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

## Individual Research Report (IRR)

**Task:** Select a problem to research, read a variety of sources and write a research report evaluating those materials

**Topic:** Individual contribution to a team project

**Max. Points:** 30

**Mean Score:** 20.04

### ***What were the responses to this task expected to demonstrate?***

This task assessed the student's ability to:

- Investigate a particular approach or range of perspectives on a research topic selected by a student team;
- Conduct scholarly research relevant to the topic; and
- Produce an evaluative report on the research conducted, analyzing the reasoning within the sources as well as the relevance and credibility of evidence used in those sources

### ***How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this task?***

Responses reflected a beginning mastery of basic research skills: defining a question, learning what scholarly/professional work has addressed that question on a variety of levels, parsing out an author's argument, and evaluating the weight of the evidence used to support the argument.

The table below shows how students scored this year, compared to the previous four years, on the Individual Research Report.

Individual Research Report	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mean scores (Max. 30 points)	19.93	21.35	21.14	20.75	20.04

### ***What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge or skills were seen in the responses to this task?***

<i>Responses that Demonstrated Common Misconceptions/Gaps in Skills:</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrated Understanding:</i>
<b>Choice of Topic</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chose a topic too broad or too narrow to achieve research depth</li><li>• Failed to place the issue in context and explain why the issue mattered</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chose a clearly defined and researchable topic</li><li>• Clearly described why and how the issue addressed was important, including a title that gave the reader an entrée into the topic</li></ul>

### ***Research and Evaluation of Evidence***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conducted superficial research, relying on general websites or general reference sources</li><li>• Excessively quoted information from sources without commentary, reflecting limited student understanding of the material</li><li>• Ignored the sources, substituting the student's own opinion about the research topic, often repeating the general thesis or topic without elaboration or reducing a complex argument to an oversimplified generalization</li><li>• Evaluated evidence superficially without regard to source, treating all sources as equal in quality and relevance</li><li>• Failed to synthesize or organize research, often moving from one source to another without explanation; failed to explain why information was included</li><li>• Failed to recognize the perspectives of each source, often simply summarizing each one</li><li>• Used material from second hand sources quoted in text</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Used a variety of credible, well-vetted sources, including peer-reviewed materials, selected sources indicated an awareness of the scholarly discourse</li><li>• Demonstrated clear understanding of the arguments from each of the sources, allowing concise and insightful evaluation and commentary anchored in the source</li><li>• Maintained a focus on reporting on and about the materials evaluated in the report, articulating connections between sources</li><li>• Evaluated evidence purposively, or explained with attributive tags to bolster credibility and relevance</li><li>• Organized and synthesized research results logically, explaining why the research was included</li><li>• Explained the perspectives of each source, discussing how the sources were in conversation with one another</li><li>• Tracked down second-hand information from sources to verify credibility and relevance</li></ul> |
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### ***Attribution/Bibliography***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inadequately attributed material overall or failed to signal a paraphrase</li><li>• Neglected to link in-text citations to bibliography</li><li>• Relied heavily on URLs as citations and/or confused the tool used to locate the source (e.g. EBSCO) with the source itself (e.g. JAMA); failed to make certain that all elements were contained in bibliography</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appropriately attributed all sources referenced, making clear the type of source used</li><li>• Made certain that in-text citations were listed in bibliography and vice versa</li><li>• Correctly referenced original sources of materials; bibliography consistently contained all required elements</li></ul> |
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<b>Writing Mechanics</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tone of report informal OR overly technical, with the latter suggesting a lack of understanding on the student’s part</li> <li>• Contained many errors of spelling, syntax and grammar, making paper difficult to read</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilized an academic writing voice able to convey complex ideas</li> <li>• Proofread to correct errors in spelling, syntax and grammar</li> </ul>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceeded word count</li> <li>• Uploaded incorrect assignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edited for word count</li> <li>• Checked to make sure correct assignment uploaded</li> </ul>

**What could teachers do to improve student performance on the IRR?**

- Discuss different types of sources (books, articles, journalistic pieces) to help students understand what kinds of sources are important in a research project
- Ask students to look at a reference page as a collection of authoritative voices on a topic
- Ask students to include peer-reviewed academic sources—and engage the nuances of them (rather than “translate” them to general language as a journalist would)
- Teach students to evaluate sources used within the research they are reviewing
- Practice reading academic sources and tracing a line of argument and introduce academic conventions
- Have students teach the findings of their IRR to each other before planning their team presentation
- Remind students to use precise language throughout the report
- Urge students to use citations from the moment they begin to write
- Remind students to check for all elements that allow a reader to instantly discern the type of source and quality of sources being used
- Remind students to check the in-text citations they have used against their reference page
- Remind students to clearly signal paraphrased material (usually, through attributive tags to begin and parentheticals to end)
- Remind students to review their Turnitin report as an opportunity to refine their paraphrase and citation skills

**What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this task?**

- Work through student samples and commentaries on AP Central to model what high-scoring responses look like (and show common errors)
- Use the online Professional Learning modules for teachers (accessible through AP Classroom>Course Resources>Overview) to help clarify and demonstrate the requirements of the rubric
- Use the AP Daily videos in AP Classroom (e.g., Performance Task 1 Videos 4, 5 and 6 to help with process; UAP videos for perspectives; ESE and SUE videos for finding and selecting relevant and credible evidence)

## Individual Written Argument

**Task:** Write a 2,000-word, evidence-based argument

**Topic:** Research and Synthesis based on stimulus material

**Max. Points:** 48

**Mean Score:** 29.92

### *What were the responses to this task expected to demonstrate?*

This task assessed the students' ability to:

- Review a set of stimulus materials and decide on a theme derived from at least **two** of the sources
- Formulate a research question directly related to that theme
- Conduct research and evaluate relevant, credible and scholarly materials to answer the research question
- Formulate a well-reasoned argument with a clear line of reasoning and a plausible conclusion
- Evaluate and acknowledge counterarguments and different perspectives
- Write a 2,000-word argument that is logically organized and supported by credible evidence

### *How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this task?*

The table below shows how students scored this year, compared to the previous four years, on the Individual Written Argument.

Individual Written-Argument	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mean scores (Max. 48 points)	28.44	26.0	29.12	31.98	29.92

**What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge or skills were seen in the responses to this task?**

<i>Responses that Demonstrated Common Misconceptions/Gaps in Skills:</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding:</i>
<b>Choice of Topic</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycled or repurposed papers written for other courses or assignments, shoehorning in a reference to the stimulus materials but clearly not the central focus of the paper</li> <li>• Adopted an argument already presented in one of the stimulus sources or failed to identify a theme that connected at least <b>two</b> sources</li> <li>• Selected a topic from one stimulus source that is not covered or discussed in another source, i.e., environmentalism, pollution, or endangered species from “Fast Fashion” article</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed a research question closely linked to the 2022 stimulus materials, showing student engagement and allowing those documents to inspire genuine curiosity</li> <li>• Discovered themes that were clearly rooted in at least two texts in the stimulus packet, including themes outside of the overarching theme of Conformity</li> </ul>
<b>Use of Stimulus Materials</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilized stimulus materials as contrived jumping off points, mentioning them only cursorily or in discussions that did not connect the materials to the argument</li> <li>• Omitted any reference to stimulus materials</li> <li>• Used stimulus source for a definition or fact that could be more easily obtained from other, more relevant sources</li> <li>• Misinterpreted or misrepresented the content or context of a stimulus course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chose an area of inquiry that was thematically rooted in two or more documents in the stimulus packet</li> <li>• Integrated details from the stimulus materials, being explicit about the relevance of that material to the question and the argument</li> <li>• Contextualized the stimulus document to represent the source accurately</li> <li>• Positioned evidence from a stimulus document in conversation with evidence from other sources</li> <li>• Showed how perspectives that agreed or disagreed with each other were tethered to the sources</li> </ul>

### ***Development of Research Question/Context***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provided broad research questions or theses that oversimplified perspectives, claims or conclusions</li><li>• Failed to situate the research topic in a particular time or place</li><li>• Failed to convey why the topic matters or who it affects</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chose an area of inquiry, typically situated in time and place, which was narrow enough to allow full development of well-defined perspectives</li><li>• Clarified the research question and/or thesis so the reader did not have to guess at the writer’s intention</li><li>• Provided specific and relevant details (such as groups of people in certain countries during a specific time period) to convey why the research question is important</li></ul> |
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### ***Evaluation of Multiple Perspectives***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Failed to address /explore/refute opposing, competing or alternative perspectives</li><li>• Only generally compared perspectives, perhaps, for example, noting agreement or disagreement without more specific analysis</li><li>• Conflated lenses and perspectives, oversimplifying complex arguments</li><li>• Chose lenses or perspectives inappropriate for the subject matter</li><li>• Reduced a tapestry of perspectives to one source or one voice</li><li>• Assumed all stakeholders within a lens share the same perspective (e.g., “teachers believe...”) without connecting that perspective to a source</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explored a full spectrum of perspectives to reveal the complexity of an issue</li><li>• Elaborated on the connections between perspective by evaluating implications and limitations</li><li>• Revealed a clear understanding of the difference between a lens (a filter through which to consider an issue) and a perspective (a point of view conveyed via an argument)</li><li>• Engaged with the evidence and reasoning of alternate views</li><li>• Strengthened the impact of perspectives by linking them to valid, relevant sources</li></ul> |
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### ***Development of Line of Reasoning***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lacked commentary to establish an argument or meaningfully evaluate or connect with evidence or merely summarized preceding quotes</li><li>• Lacked a clear argument or made conclusions that merely summarized points or failed to align with research question or allowed a collection of evidence to imply an argument rather than stating the argument</li><li>• Developed a weak line of reasoning with minimal or illogical connections between claims, and/or ignored obvious logical flaws or clear counterpoints to claims</li><li>• Obscured the line of reasoning through formatting choices such as lack of paragraph breaks or poorly chosen subtitles</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrated the links between evidence and claims by providing commentary that engaged with the details presented in the evidence</li><li>• Took a clearly articulated position allowing a strong student voice to drive the paper</li><li>• Presented a clear line of reasoning, explaining links between claims and allowing a strong student voice to drive the paper</li><li>• Used formatting to fully communicate the argument, such as headings and paragraph breaks</li></ul> |
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### ***Selection and Use of Evidence***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Selected evidence primarily from journalistic or popular sources, including random blogs, online encyclopedic sources, or social media sites</li><li>• Treated all evidence as equal in relevance or credibility without presenting commentary that could justify the use of such sources</li><li>• Relied overly on a single source</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Used a variety of well-vetted sources, including peer-reviewed journals and other academic sources</li><li>• Provided commentary to explain the relevance and credibility of evidence when it was not obvious through in-text attribution or citation</li><li>• Selected relevant evidence that fully supported the claims</li></ul> |
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### ***Citation Conventions***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attributed source material in-text without an accompanying bibliographic entry and/or listed sources in bibliography not found in text</li><li>• Used different attributive tags in text and bibliography, requiring reader to make links (for example, using an article title in text, but beginning bibliographic entry with author's name)</li><li>• Provided citations with missing elements, often because utilizing only a URL</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensured that all sources, including stimulus sources, were listed in bibliography and matched attributions in the body of the response</li><li>• Applied an academically accepted citation style consistently, including all essential elements</li><li>• Formatted both in-text citations and bibliography entries clearly</li></ul> |
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### ***Grammar and Style Conventions***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Had a tone that was colloquial or overly casual, or, on the other hand, so dense that the paper became incoherent</li><li>• Obscured complex ideas by selecting vague words and/or using cumbersome syntactical choices</li><li>• Included numerous grammatical errors such as comma splices, sentence fragments, or spelling errors such that the response was difficult to understand without reader guesswork</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintained an academic and stylistically appropriate voice</li><li>• Employed varied syntax and precise word choice, mostly free of grammatical errors, to enhance communication of complex ideas</li></ul> |
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### ***How could teachers improve their student performance in the IWA?***

- Practice reading and annotating college-level texts, identifying the argument, line of reasoning, and supporting evidence
- Talk explicitly and often about how to integrate stimulus materials and draw themes from two or more texts
- Teach students the importance of the “so what” question so that they learn to contextualize source materials and frame arguments
- Practice writing commentary about articles; use the commentary to make links among texts
- Use materials online and elsewhere that discuss how to create a research question and how to use that question to drive their argument, working with them to learn how to return to the research question throughout the argument
- Remind students how this task differs from the IRR completed earlier
- Use peer review to help students make certain that they are sustaining an argument and using evidence to support that argument; peer review can also be used to ensure that students have adopted an academic voice
- Explore academic integrity and professional ethics around plagiarism, as well as learning to paraphrase appropriately and with attribution
- As a matter of academic integrity, remind students that they cannot repurpose papers from other classes, even if the writing is their own, and point out that such papers are typically easy to spot, as the theme from the stimulus materials will often look “shoe-horned” in (or risks scoring 0 as “off-topic”)
- Remind students to double-check their upload to the Digital Portfolio is the correct file in the correct place

***What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the skills required in the IWA?***

- Work through student samples on AP Central to model what high-scoring responses look like (and try reverse outlining these)
- Use resources on the teacher community that suggest ways of engaging students with stimulus materials
- Use the online Professional Learning modules for teachers (accessible through AP Classroom>Course Resources>Overview) to help clarify and demonstrate the requirements of the rubric
- Use AP Daily videos in AP Classroom (e.g., Performance Task 2 videos 1 through 14, UAP videos for perspectives, ESE and SUE videos for finding and selecting relevant and credible evidence, ESA videos for building arguments)

## End-of-Course Exam, Part A

**Task:** Respond to 3 short-answer prompts.

**Topic:** Evaluate a short text, identifying the argument, line of reasoning and effectiveness of evidence.

**Max Points:** 15

**Mean Score:** 10.25

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

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

### ***How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

The table below shows how students scored this year, compared to the previous four years, on each question in Part A of the End-of-Course Exam:

EOC Exam Part A Mean scores	2018	2019	2021	2022
Q1 (3 pts max)	2.03	1.86	2.12	2.01
Q2 (6 pts max)	4.13	4.11	4.20	4.16
Q3 (6 pts max)	4.01	3.8	4.05	4.08

### ***What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge or skills were seen in the responses to this question?***

<i>Responses that Demonstrated Common Misconceptions/Gaps in Skills:</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding:</i>
<b>Identifying Argument</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identified only part of an argument, rather than all of its components (e.g., “Handwriting should be taught in school”)</li><li>Identified the main argument in vague or overgeneralized terms (e.g., “There is a case for handwriting”; “Handwriting is important”)</li><li>Confused claims with the main argument</li><li>Misstated the main idea directly (e.g., “Parents should help students practice cursive writing at home”)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Translated the author’s argument into the student’s own words</li><li>Identified all main components of the argument: 1) Handwriting should be taught in schools 2) Writing by hand activates parts of the brain 3) Writing by hand helps students improve academic performance</li><li>Incorporated details critical to the argument (e.g., “Writing by hand improves memory, impulse control, and attention”)</li></ul>

### ***Explaining Line of Reasoning***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Misidentified claims, often confusing support for the claim with the claim itself (e.g., evidence from Dinehart: “handwriting is not a skill that’s tested”) or summarized argument without understanding claims</li><li>• Asserted that claims were linked without explanation or attempted to link claims using illogical or circular reasoning</li><li>• Linked claims to personal opinions not contained in author’s argument</li><li>• Failed to note how counterclaims were addressed by author</li><li>• Focused on connecting claims to evidence rather than to other claims or to the main argument</li><li>• Used the term Line of Reasoning in a way that showed misunderstanding of the concept</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accurately identified specific claims</li><li>• Contextualized and explained connections between the claims, used to build an argument</li><li>• Linked claims to overall argument</li><li>• Often organized by paragraphs, grouped according to central points of argument</li><li>• Identified counterarguments presented by author (e.g., “[The author] introduces a counterargument that better grades from handwriting come from teacher bias, then quickly refutes it by using evidence of SAT scores and math grades”)</li><li>• Reflected a solid understanding of how the author constructed the argument and why it was important</li><li>• Explained the author’s Line of Reasoning (e.g., “The author transitions from the cognitive benefits to the academic benefits of handwriting. By doing so, she presents an additional perspective to the ways that handwriting can benefit students.”)</li></ul> |
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### ***Evaluating Evidence***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Referenced evidence without evaluating whether that evidence supported a particular claim</li><li>• Evaluated the credibility of sources without evaluating the actual evidence</li><li>• Conflated claims with evidence</li><li>• Focused only on credentials of the source or professional affiliations</li><li>• Merely asserted evidence as credible or relevant without explaining how the evidence supported or failed to support the claims (“While most sources from the first half of [the] essay were very credible, most of the ones in the second half were not.”)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identified with particularity the evidence used to support a claim</li><li>• Explained both the credibility and relevance of specific pieces of evidence (e.g., “The use of an academic journal establishes the credibility of the evidence presented. Moreover, the evidence is relevant as it is used to show how handwriting is beneficial to students compared to typing, connecting back to her main claim which argues the need to continue handwriting instruction.”)</li><li>• Assessed how the evidence strongly or weakly supported a claim</li><li>• Linked evaluation of the evidence back to the author’s overall argument</li></ul> |
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**What advice would you offer teachers to help them improve student performance on Part A of the Exam?**

- Have students practice identifying arguments, claims, and evidence in every article they examine
- Scaffold the construction of an argument, diagramming the main argument, claims, sub-claims and evidence
- Introduce students to the general rules of argumentative writing, encouraging them to understand how authors appeal to readers
- Help students to translate an author’s argument into their own words in order to be certain they understand the argument
- Remind students that complex arguments often have multiple components, not always expressly stated at the outset
- Practice looking at both claims and counterclaims, reminding them that a good argument will typically nod to, and try to refute, counterarguments
- Remind students to be explicit when explaining how specific pieces of evidence connect to a main argument
- Remind students that credibility of evidence must be assessed both in terms of its source (beyond ‘John Doe teaches at X University’) and its use in supporting the author’s argument
- Practice evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of evidence
- Remind students to write or print legibly so that a reader can keep the substance of the student’s response in the forefront

**What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare for the skills being assessed in Part A?**

- Practice with prompts from earlier years (available on AP Central and in AP Classroom)
- Work through student samples and commentaries on AP Central to model what high-scoring responses look like
- Use the online Professional Learning modules for teachers (accessible through AP Classroom>Course Resources>Overview) to help clarify and exemplify the requirements of the rubric
- Use AP Daily Video in AP Classroom “End-of-Course Exam Video 1”

## End-of-Course Exam, Part B

**Task:** Read four short stimulus pieces, identifying a theme, and develop an argument, drawing support from at least two of those four sources

**Topic:** Synthesis Essay

**Max. Points:** 24

**Mean Score:** 17.11

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

This question assessed students' ability to:

- Read the sources critically, understanding the different perspective of each source;
- Identify a theme or issue connecting the provided sources
- Use the theme as an impetus for writing a logically organized, well-reasoned, and well-crafted argument presenting the student's perspective
- Incorporate two or more of the sources to support the newly-developed argument
- Build the argument with a series of logical claims
- Link claims to supporting evidence
- Cite sources, identifying them either by author or by letters assigned in the prompt
- Complete the task within a 90-minute time period

### ***How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

The table below shows how students scored this year, compared to the previous four years, on Part B of the End-of-Course Exam:

EOC Exam Part B	2018	2019	2021	2022
Mean scores (Max. 24 points)	17.9	16.95	16.79	17.11

**What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge or skills were seen in the responses to this question?**

<i>Responses that Demonstrated Common Misconceptions/Gaps in Skills:</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrated Understanding:</i>
<b>Using sources</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated a superficial reading of the provided sources</li> <li>• Used the argument from the first source in the packet: people know their online information isn't private, but they do little or nothing to protect it</li> <li>• Had their own agenda (IWA, IRR, or a paper written for another course) and forced the provided sources to support strained arguments largely unconnected to those sources</li> <li>• Forced all four provided sources into their arguments, often choosing the wrong citation for a particular argument</li> <li>• Often misread or misinterpreted the provided sources:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many students read Orwell's 1984 (Source B) literally, attempting to use it as evidence of a) the/a government currently watching us; b) a society somewhere in the world where invasions of privacy by the Thought Police, telescreens, etc. actually happen; or c) increased danger because now we have more technologies than we did in 1984.</li> <li>• Many students misinterpreted the data from Pew Research (Source D) failing to read the italics above the charts-- "% who say..." or "% of US adults who say..."-- and instead referring to the unit of analysis as the number of people in the study, i.e. 40 out of 85 people are concerned about the social media sites they use. Additionally, many students used Source D as evidence of actual instances of privacy invasion.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated a careful reading of the sources, recognizing them as distinct voices in a complicated discussion</li> <li>• Offered an argument that synthesized the perspectives of two or more sources</li> <li>• Allowed the source materials to inspire an original idea in the time allotted</li> <li>• Were deliberate in choosing sources and specific segments of text that supported their arguments</li> <li>• Strategically selected and synthesized perspectives and information from the sources to support a compelling argument. This synthesis could take place within paragraphs or in the argument as a whole. For example:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students might use sources A and D to demonstrate that technological oversight of our lives is an acceptable price to pay for the many conveniences and connections that technology gives us. While Source D demonstrates that not so many are concerned a great deal about possible privacy invasions, Source A further shows that people tend to not act even when informed of privacy violation because they really want technology in their lives.</li> <li>• Students could also pair sources B and C to show that although privacy invasion by the powerful is a matter that should worry everyone, minority populations can be especially vulnerable to discrimination</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### ***Creating and Supporting an Argument***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Failed to state a clear position/thesis statement/argument, or utilized a question (one that was never answered) as a thesis</li><li>• Stated a thematic connection without offering a perspective or argument of their own (“All of the sources share a common theme that...”)</li><li>• Articulated a thesis but failed to build an argument moving from claim to claim</li><li>• Began each body paragraph “Source X says.” Sometimes students worked inductively to make an argument, but more often than not, students went on to summarize the source.</li><li>• Neglected to outline their arguments before writing, resulting in failed lines of reasoning and generally confusing organization</li><li>• Failed to provide commentary on the evidence, leaving the reader to make assumptions about its validity and relevance</li><li>• Failed to link evidence to specific claims in the argument</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Took a position and clearly communicated that position to the reader. Many students built their arguments by acknowledging the benefits of technology and discussing the challenges that come with our growing reliance on technology worldwide.</li><li>• Identified a broad thematic connection to contextualize the student’s perspective, swiftly transitioning to the central argument</li><li>• Crafted a thoughtful, arguable thesis. For example, many argued in favor of various solutions that would allow us to navigate the world of technology more safely; new information literacy curricula in schools; new governmental policies mandating corporate responsibility; more oversight of workplace environments; public awareness campaigns; taking personal responsibility for one's public presence online, etc.</li><li>• Organized the response in an effective manner to support the line of reasoning</li><li>• Employed transitions to guide the reader from claim to claim in the line of reasoning. Readers knew exactly what the student was attempting to argue.</li><li>• Interpreted evidence by exploring implications, limitations, and/or objections</li><li>• Reminded the readers about the central claim throughout the response, linking different pieces of evidence to the overarching argument</li></ul> |
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### ***Applying Conventions***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Had not been edited or revised</li><li>• Paid little attention to word choice</li><li>• Used source material without quotation marks, introductions, or parenthetical citations. Frequently “dropped” quotations from the source material without integrating material into the student’s own writing</li><li>• Was illegible</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Used grammar and syntax that enhanced the argument</li><li>• Wrote in an academic style, choosing words carefully</li><li>• Skillfully attributed, cited, or embedded source material. Many students incorporated source material with meaningful discussions of the author, time, place, or genre</li><li>• Was legible</li></ul> |
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### ***What advice would you offer to teachers to help their students improve their skills on this task?***

Consider explicitly teaching the task directions for EOC Exam, Part B.

- The directions begin by asking students to “read carefully..., focusing on a theme.” Some students are seeing this first task as part of their written response; they write one, two, sometimes three paragraphs exploring the theme.
- If the tasks for this prompt were numbered, this would simply be **task number 1: Read and think**. Ask students to annotate the sources during this phase of the assessment. The student should not begin writing in the test booklet until this step is complete. In other words, responses should begin with the student’s argument, not an extended discussion of theme, such as “*A common theme among the sources is X. Source A was about ... which connects to the theme by ... and Source B was about ... which connects to the theme by ...*” The sources should not act as the student’s voice.
- Once students have “spoken” with all of the sources, they are prepared to take their own position. They are ready for **task number 2: Plan and outline**. They should do this to be prepared to “Write a logically organized, well-reasoned, and well written argument that presents your own perspective on the theme or issue.”
- Now that students have an argument in mind, they should carefully choose at least two of the provided sources as support. Those sources must be relevant and actually support the claim(s) being made. (Students also grapple with this concept in EOC, Part A. Students struggle to determine whether evidence is relevant or not.) Students can reverse this process as well; for example, they may begin the process by finding two arguments from sources that speak to one another. Students can then build their own argument in order to join that conversation. Caution students that a response that summarizes arguments made in two sources and then concludes with a line or two presenting their personal perspective will not score well.
- Only once students have an outline of their claims and supporting evidence should they do **task number 3: Write a well-reasoned argument**.

It is important to help students understand that the best responses move beyond a claim made by one of the sources, such as “People say they are concerned about their privacy but do not take measures to secure it properly.” While many responses identified a topic, such as technology, that was discussed by more than one source, the most successful responses went a step further to establish an argument that connected the sources but occurred in none of them. For example, many students discussed the dangers of privacy paradox outlined in Source A by summoning evidence from Source C to demonstrate violations happening today and cautioning about a grim possibility imagined by Orwell (Source B). Or, students advocated for a new school curricula with emphasis on information literacy, putting Source A and D in conversation with one another. While Source D provides percentages of people in the US who express various concerns about privacy violations, Source A attempts to explain possible reasons for the current insufficient action as well as possible reasons for people's confusion about privacy issues.

### **Other suggestions:**

- Provide students ample opportunities in class to practice entering into conversations that synthesize multiple arguments--different numbers of sources, different contexts, different genres, different time periods. Teachers could begin with small student groups made up of members who have differing opinions on a subject. Then consider moving on to synthesize arguments from various texts.
- Practice writing commentary. Teach students to see commentary as an action: Interpret. It is not a passive process. It is not a summary. Students should address implications, limitations, and or objections.
- Though students must read all four sources, please ask them to be discerning when choosing source material to support their own arguments.
- Teach students how to identify the genre of a source and the conventions of that genre. Students should be taught not to directly compare sources when they follow different conventions and expectations. When used as sources for students' own arguments, works of fiction should not be used the same as academic research or news articles.
- Help students discern the difference between the author of a source and a source cited by the author. Students need to properly attribute the sources cited within any given source.
- Teach students to use transitions. Use professional writers as models.
- Encourage students to proofread their work
- Encourage students to write legibly. It is unfortunate when poor penmanship obscures a student argument.

### ***What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare for the skills being assessed in Part B?***

- Practice with prompts from earlier years (available on AP Central and in AP Classroom)
- Work through student samples and commentaries on AP Central to model what high-scoring responses look like
- Use the online Professional Learning modules for teachers (accessible through AP Classroom>Course Resources>Overview) to help clarify and exemplify the requirements of the rubric
- Use AP Daily Video in AP Classroom “End-of-Course Exam Video 2”