



## Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2023 AP<sup>®</sup> French Language and Culture Free-Response Questions

• Number of Readers		163		
<b>Total Group</b>				
• Number of Students Scored		18,655		
• Score Distribution		Exam Score	N	%At
		5	2,467	13.22
		4	4,677	25.07
		3	6,790	36.40
		2	3,686	19.76
		1	1,035	5.55
• Global Mean		3.21		
<b>Standard Group*</b>				
• Number of Students Scored		6,266		
• Score Distribution		Exam Score	N	%At
		5	582	9.29
		4	1,508	24.07
		3	2,455	39.18
		2	1,339	21.37
		1	382	6.10
• Global Mean		3.09		

The following comments on the 2023 free-response questions for AP<sup>®</sup> French Language and Culture were written by the Chief Reader, John Moran of New York University. 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.

## Question 1

**Task:** Email Reply

**Topic:** International Human Rights Day

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.14

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.06

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

This task assessed writing in the interpersonal communicative mode by having the student write a reply to an email message. Students were allotted 15 minutes to read the message and write the reply. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task. Students needed to be able first to comprehend the email and then to write a reply using a formal form of address. The reply needed to address all the questions and requests raised in the message, as well as ask for more details about something mentioned in the message.

The course theme for the email reply was Global Challenges. The task required students to respond to Ms. Monique Blum, a member of the organizing committee for International Human Rights Day. Ms. Blum got in touch with the student because the student had expressed an interest in participating in the event. Ms. Blum explains that there will be various demonstrations in several large cities around the world for International Human Rights Day. She adds that the three focal themes chosen by the committee this year are education, health, and the environment and that they are seeking proposals for activities centered on these themes. Ms. Blum then asks the student which of the three themes interests the student the most and why. She continues by asking what the student proposes to attract the public, in particular people of the student's age.

### ***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

Students were generally able to understand the task, the task requirements, and the email to which they were asked to respond. Most students were able to answer both questions, although with varying degrees of elaboration, in part because some students did not notice that the first question had two parts. Not all students asked for details about something mentioned in the email. Many students were able to draw from topics included in the CED (Course and Exam Description) under the following themes and contexts: Global Challenges (Environmental issues) and Contemporary Life (Education and Advertising).

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

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Neglecting to include answers to both questions as well as a request for further information about something mentioned in the message.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide required information (e.g., selected one of the three themes and asked for details about the other cities where the event would be held) with frequent elaboration.</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not understanding the verb <i>attire</i>, which some students confused with the English word “attire,” which led them to write about clothing.</li> <li>• Not seeing or not understanding the word “<i>lequel</i>” in the first question, leading some students to discuss all three themes or to introduce a new theme.</li> <li>• Neglecting to read the introduction to the email, or the email prompt, thoroughly, which resulted in some students not understanding that they themselves were answering the email and instead adopting the role of a professor or doctor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the exchange with a response that is appropriate within the context of the task.</li> <li>• Strong responses included ideas on ways to attract young people to this event, and many students suggested using the internet and social networks.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composing a response that consists mainly of language taken directly from the prompt or restatements (not always successful) of that language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contain varied and appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the informal “<i>tu</i>,” informal vocabulary, and/or informal openings and closings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate mostly consistent use of register appropriate for the situation, and control of cultural conventions appropriate for formal correspondence, despite occasional errors.</li> </ul>

**Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

### **Completing the task and Time Management**

- Students should be given the opportunity to practice interpersonal writing at the earliest level possible, ideally prior to the AP class. Students can practice by reading and responding to a wide variety of emails and letters, which will also give them the chance to observe and discuss register as it applies to vocabulary, syntax, openings, and closings.
- Teachers should help students write legibly.
- Teachers should remind their students that they must complete all the elements of the task (respond to both questions/requests in the email and then ask for more details about something mentioned in the message) for their response to be considered clearly appropriate. Many students spend so much time composing an introduction to their emails that they appear to run out of time and are, as a result, unable to complete the task successfully.
- Teachers should instruct their students on how to manage their time well so that they can complete the task within the 15 minutes allotted.
- Teachers should expose students to emails of various types and lengths so that they can better analyze their messages and determine what information is important to incorporate in their replies.
- A very long, formal closing is not necessary. Either “*Cordialement*” or “*Bien cordialement*,” for example, is sufficient. Long formulaic closings are more appropriate for traditional written correspondence.
- Teachers should train students to ask for more details about something mentioned in the message so that their request or question makes sense within the context of the task.

- Students should remember that this is an exercise in which they play the role of a student responding to a specific email. They should, therefore, embrace their role to complete the task within the context provided in the prompt. Students who are unaware of or try to negate the premise of the task (“I didn’t know about this event” or “I’m sorry; you have contacted me mistakenly,” for example) do not maintain the exchange with an appropriate response.

### Language

- Some student responses read more like essays than emails. Students should remember that this is a written interpersonal exchange rather than a written presentation. It is imperative, however, that a formal register be maintained throughout.
- Teachers should remind their students to avoid limiting themselves to recycling language from the stimulus. Students should directly answer the questions asked in the email and should strive to incorporate words and expressions beyond those included in the stimulus.
- There is no need to incorporate a certain number of “advanced structures” (the subjunctive, for example), especially if doing so will be at the expense of grammatical accuracy. Students should focus on making their grammar serve the purpose of their message and not the other way around.
- Because so many email prompts require the student to discuss personal interests, teach students how to use and differentiate between the two expressions *intéresser quelqu’un* and *s’intéresser à quelque chose* successfully.
- Students should strive to structure their responses on the page to facilitate understanding for the reader. The use of clear and logical paragraphs and transitional elements to organize the response, as well as writing legibly, can all aid in achieving this goal.
- Teachers should encourage their students to integrate transitional words into their responses and to answer the questions asked with full sentences rather than with lists.
- Students should be exposed to as many Francophone communities as possible so that their responses do not include inaccurate information.

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

- The AP French Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the unit guides for building students’ skills in writing successful email replies. The email reply task model is presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-french-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP French Language and Culture within AP Classroom. As noted above, the email reply task model is presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5 (including multiple AP Daily Videos that focus on developing strategies for and practicing email replies) and again in the 2021 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 4 and the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Sessions 2 and 7. AP Classroom may be accessed here: [AP French Language and Culture: Classroom Resources | AP Central – The College Board](#).
- Through AP Classroom teachers can also access the AP Question Bank. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access email replies from previous exams. Teachers can also access three practice exams aligned to the 2023 Exam in the AP Question Bank, which provide additional practice in the email reply and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers can view the AP World Language and Culture online module on interpersonal writing, *Interpersonal Communication: Developing Writing Abilities* by Nyan-Ping Bi, to learn some strategies

that focus on developing students' interpersonal writing skills. Teachers can access this online module here: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/developing-interpersonal-writing-abilities/index.html>.

- Teachers can download the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP French Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance: [AP French Language and Culture Exam - AP Central \(collegeboard.org\)](#).
- Teachers can choose a sample email reply prompt from the posted free-response questions from 2012–2023 and access the corresponding student sample responses of high, mid, and low performances to share with students so they can examine student work vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. This will inform them further of expectations for performance on this task, as well as the evaluative criteria for each score point: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-french-language-and-culture/exam>.
- Teachers can assign email replies for students to complete under the same conditions and time constraints as on the exam and then score them using the scoring guidelines. Feedback to students should focus on what students should do to move their performance to the next higher level.
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach German, Italian, and Spanish to determine what common shared issues there are across languages and to share strategies that will improve student performance.

## Question 2

**Task:** Argumentative Essay

**Topic:** Paper Books and E-Books

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.17

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.10

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

This task assessed writing in the presentational communicative mode by having the student write an argumentative essay on a given topic while referencing three sources of information about the topic. Students were first allotted 6 minutes to read the essay topic and the two printed sources. Then they listened to the one audio source. Afterward, they had 40 minutes to write the essay. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task. Students needed to be able first to comprehend the three sources and then to present their different viewpoints. In addition, they also had to present their own viewpoint and defend it thoroughly and coherently, using information from all of the sources to support the argument. As they referred to the sources, they had to identify them appropriately. Furthermore, the essay had to be organized into clear paragraphs.

The course theme for the argumentative essay was Science and Technology. Students had to write an argumentative essay on whether e-books or paper books are preferable. Students needed to support their response with evidence taken from the following sources:

- An article entitled “Trips on the subway have shaken up literature more than e-books.” The article consists of an interview with the writer Bernard Werber, who says not to confuse the medium and the art form, explaining that he prefers to read some stories on paper and others in a digital format. He notes that riding the subway creates a rhythm—reading a chapter per trip. This rhythm provides writers more of a reason to change writing styles than e-books. He adds that since he does most of his reading on the subway, he tends to prefer short stories, which are better suited to our era of channel surfing. This habit of channel surfing has made readers want to “surf” stories or chapters. He concludes by explaining that new tools for reading will increase the numbers of young readers and will rejuvenate the old-fashioned literary world, adding that if we do not manage to move toward short stories, Anglo-Saxon literature will win out.
- An infographic entitled “Europe remains faithful to the paper book,” which shows the percentages of adults in five Western European countries that have read e-books or paper books in the past twelve months. The percentages show that paper books are in the majority for each of the countries listed.
- An interview entitled “Is the paper book going to disappear?” In the interview, Olivier Larizza, a writer and professor, explains that e-books have created readers that pass from text to text like a bee, which means that an entire form of literature can no longer be understood: dense, profound texts requiring linear, quiet reading. He observes that paper books have a longer life than e-books, that the use of screens for e-books interferes with sleep, and that screens interfere with concentration while paper favors it. He rejects the commonly held belief that e-books are better for the environment, explaining that we have never printed more than we have since the introduction of e-books. He concludes by enumerating the cognitive factors that are negatively affected by the use of screens and by stating that paper books have a bright future.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

Most students were able to complete the task, with varying degrees of success: answering the question of whether e-books or paper books are preferable. On the whole, students were able to understand the three sources and integrate them into their argument.

**Content and Skills:**

- Most responses demonstrated the ability to identify the main idea(s) and facts of each source, several supporting details, and the intent of the texts.
- Most responses integrated a treatment of the of the topic by answering the question of whether e-books or paper books are preferable.
- Some students did not provide an effective treatment of the topic within the context of the task because students did not correctly interpret the first and third sources while offering their own viewpoint.

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

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not recognizing the requirement to present and defend a specific viewpoint and a supporting argument for that viewpoint with clarity.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present and defend the student’s own viewpoint on the topic with a high degree of clarity; develop an argument with coherence and detail.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Misunderstanding the general idea of the sources, which led to confusion: the professor in source three (the audio) being understood as saying that e-books are good for the environment.</li><li>• Misunderstanding vocabulary in the sources, which led to confusion: “nouvelles” in source one (the article) understood as a reference to the news.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate a high degree of comprehension of the sources’ viewpoints, with very few minor inaccuracies.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Neglecting to identify clearly the sources being referred to in support of the argument presented.</li><li>• Neglecting to refer to all three of the sources, or in some cases, neglecting to refer to any of the sources.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Integrate content from all three sources in support of the argument.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Neglecting to organize the essay clearly and coherently so as to support the argument presented.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present an organized essay; effectively use transitional elements and cohesive devices, including an introduction, the development of an argument, a clear viewpoint supported by the three sources, and a conclusion.</li></ul>

***Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?***

### **Completing the task and Time Management**

- Teachers should give students ample opportunities to practice developing their own viewpoints in writing, using authentic sources in the target language: reading selections (articles); charts and graphs (some students continue to struggle with how best to interpret and integrate them); and, audio selections.
- Teachers should teach their students how to take useful notes when listening to audio prompts or reading print texts. Students will need to integrate content from all three sources in support of their essay.
- Students should be provided with ample opportunity to work on the process of writing (prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing) from the earliest levels of instruction.
- Teachers should instruct students to write legibly.
- Teachers should stress the importance of explicitly citing all three sources appropriately and clearly. In addition, teachers should help students understand how best to integrate information from all three sources into their essays in support of their own arguments and avoid merely restating the opinions in the sources or merely summarizing them.
- Teachers should remind students to proofread their work for accuracy and avoid misquoting the sources.
- Teachers should help students learn to manage their time appropriately so that they are able to read/listen to the three sources, reflect upon and plan what they want to say, and then write their argumentative essay, all within the 55 minutes allotted for the task.

### **Language**

- Teachers should remind students that in addition to task completion, accuracy and variety in grammar, syntax, and usage are important. Correct verb conjugation, accurate tense usage, and article usage are specific points in need of review for many students.
- Teachers should ensure students' familiarity with vocabulary from each of the course's themes and recommended contexts.
- Teachers should remind their students that the content and organization of the essay is more important than the length. A successful essay needs a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. Students should structure their essays in paragraphs (with well-chosen, logical transitional elements to link paragraphs) so as to build their arguments clearly and coherently and support their ideas with evidence from the sources.

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

- The AP French Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the unit guides for building students' skills in writing successful essays. The argumentative essay task model is presented and practiced in Units 2, 4, and 6. This task is scaffolded to build students' skills and confidence. The first time it appears in Unit 2, students write an argumentative essay responding to a prompt using only two sources, and subsequently, they write essays using three sources. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-french-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP French Language and Culture within AP Classroom. As noted above, the Argumentative Essay task model is presented and practiced in Units 2, 4, and 6 (including multiple



AP Daily Videos that focus on introducing, developing strategies for, and practicing argumentative essays) and again in the 2021 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Sessions 2 and 3 and the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Sessions 7 and 8. AP Classroom may be accessed here:

<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-french-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-french-language-and-culture>.

- Through AP Classroom teachers can access the AP Question Bank. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access argumentative essay tasks from previous exams. Teachers can also access three practice exams aligned to the 2023 Exam in the AP Question Bank, which provide additional practice with the essay task and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should view the AP World Language and Culture online module on Presentational Writing; *Presentational Communication: A Focus on Writing*, by Federica Santini, to learn some strategies that focus on developing students' presentational writing skills. Teachers can access this online module here: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-writing/index.html>.
- Teachers should download the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP French Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance as well as the evaluative criteria for each score point: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-french-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-french-language-and-culture>.
- Teachers should choose a sample essay prompt and its sources from the posted free-response questions from 2012–2023 from AP Central: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-french-language-and-culture/exam> and access the corresponding student sample responses of high, mid, and low performances to share with students, so that they can examine student work vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. This will further inform them of expectations for performance on this task.
- Teachers should assign other argumentative essay prompts under the same conditions and time constraints as on the exam and then score them using the scoring guidelines. Feedback to students should focus on what students should do to move their performance to the next higher level.
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach German, Italian, and Spanish to determine what common shared issues there are across languages and to share strategies that will improve student performance.

### Question 3

**Task:** Conversation

**Topic:** Volunteering at an Animal Shelter

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.24

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.00

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

This task assessed speaking in the interpersonal communicative mode by having the student respond as part of a simulated oral conversation. Students were first allotted 1 minute to read a preview of the conversation, including an outline of each turn in the conversation. Then the conversation proceeded, including 20 seconds for students to speak at each of the 5 turns in the conversation. The series of 5 responses received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task. The responses had to appropriately address each turn in the conversation according to the outline as well as the simulated interlocutor's utterance.

The course theme for the conversation task was Families and Communities. In the task, the student had a simulated conversation with David, a classmate that called the student to discuss the possibility of working as volunteers at the local animal shelter. The student needed to respond to the following five audio prompts:

1. David greets the student, identifies himself, and tells the student that he has just seen a notice in a magazine saying that the local animal shelter is seeking volunteers. He asks what the student thinks of working together as volunteers.
2. David says that he thinks that the animal shelter is looking for people that would be able to go there on a regular basis. He asks the student how the student is going to change their schedule for that.
3. David explains that if he has understood the notice, there are two possibilities: working with the animals or working in the office. He then asks the student to explain to him which one of the two types of work the student prefers.
4. David comments that the shelter is not going to pay them. He then asks the opinion of the student as to the advantage of volunteer work.
5. David points out that the notice specifies that one needs a letter of recommendation to work at the shelter. He says that he is not sure who to ask, and then asks the student who the student would ask.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

Most students were able to engage in the simulated conversation with David, as guided by the outline of the conversation, with varying degrees of elaboration. In strong responses students clearly stated reasons why it is important to volunteer. While many students were unable to answer the second question successfully, this problem did not interfere with most students' success at understanding and responding to the remaining questions.

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

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having difficulty providing an appropriate response to the second question because of a misunderstanding of the phrase “<i>emploi du temps</i>.”</li> <li>• Having difficulty providing an appropriate response to the fourth question because of a misunderstanding of the word “<i>bénévolat</i>.”</li> <li>• Having difficulty providing an appropriate response to the fourth question because of a mistaken interpretation of the phrase “<i>l’avantage du bénévolat</i>” as referring only to volunteering at the animal shelter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the exchange with a series of responses that is clearly appropriate within the context of the task.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing short answers that take up only a small part of the allotted 20 seconds per answer.</li> <li>• Not following the outline of the conversation that is provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide required information (responses to the questions) with frequent elaboration.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being inconsistent in the use of informal register by switching from “<i>tu</i>” to “<i>vous</i>.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contain mostly consistent use of register appropriate for the conversation.</li> </ul>

**Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

**Completing the task and Time Management**

- Students should be provided with ample opportunity to develop their listening skills from the earliest levels of instruction through work with a variety of different types of authentic audio sources.
- Teachers should provide their students with opportunities to speak about a variety of subjects (ideally with connections to as many of the course themes as possible) in conversational settings from early levels of instruction.
- Students should practice writing their own interpersonal questions that they can then use in simulated conversations with partners starting in the first year of instruction.
- Students should be trained to read the task instructions and the outline of the conversation carefully and in so doing underline key words. They should listen to the prompts carefully and respond following the outline provided.
- Students should be provided with the chance to develop a good feeling for how long 20 seconds last. It is important that students participate as fully as possible in the conversation by providing clear answers with elaboration and using as much of the time that they are given rather than producing brief responses.

- Teachers should emphasize to students that they will receive a holistic score for the conversation task and should train students not to get flustered if they misunderstand a question or answer a question poorly. Students need to recover quickly and be able to anticipate, understand, and respond well to the following prompt/s.

## **Language**

- Teachers should explain to students that there are no specific advanced grammatical structures that have to be integrated into certain responses in the conversation. The logic of the conversation should guide the choice of structures used, and not vice versa.
- Teachers should instruct students how to use transitions effectively to strengthen their responses.
- Teachers should encourage students not to use rote or memorized answers but rather to respond with phrases appropriate to the specific context of the conversation.
- Teachers should offer ideas to students on how to end conversations because students are asked to do so in the fifth turn of the conversation task.

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

- The AP French Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the unit guides for building students' skills for engaging in the conversation task model. This task model is specifically presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-french-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP French Language and Culture within AP Classroom. As noted above, the conversation task model is presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5 (including multiple AP Daily Videos that focus on developing strategies for and practicing student conversations) and again in the 2021 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Sessions 5 and 6 and the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Sessions 5 and 6. AP Classroom may be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-french-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-french-language-and-culture>.
- Through AP Classroom teachers can access the AP Question Bank. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access conversation tasks from previous exams. Teachers can also access three practice exams aligned to the 2023 Exam in the AP Question Bank, which provide additional practice for the conversation task and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Language and Culture online module by Clarissa Adams-Fletcher in order to learn about strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing interpersonal speaking skills. Teachers can access this online module here: [https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/interpersonal-communications/story\\_html5.html](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/interpersonal-communications/story_html5.html).
- Teachers should work with students so they can respond with elaboration and detail in the 20 seconds they have for each response.
- Teach students how to use the conversation outline to their advantage. Look at commonalities from year to year so students can anticipate possible types of questions and responses.
- Teachers should download a copy of the scoring guidelines for the conversation task available on the AP French Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance. They should have students listen to the sample student responses available on

AP Central and use the scoring guidelines to understand how performance is assessed on the exam:  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-french-language-and-culture/exam>.

- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach German, Italian, and Spanish to determine what common shared issues there are across languages and to share strategies that will improve student performance.

## Question 4

**Task:** Cultural Comparison

**Topic:** The Role of Art

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.39

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.28

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

This task assessed speaking in the presentational communicative mode by having the student make a comparative oral presentation on a cultural topic. Students were allotted 4 minutes to read the topic and prepare the presentation and then 2 minutes to deliver the presentation. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task. The presentation had to compare an area of the French-speaking world to the student's own or another community, demonstrating an understanding of cultural features of the French-speaking world. Furthermore, the presentation had to be organized clearly.

The course theme for the cultural comparison task was Beauty and Aesthetics. Students had to respond to the following question: What are some of the roles of art (for example, cinema, writing, painting, etc.) in a Francophone community that you know? Compare some of the roles of art in this Francophone community and in your community or another community that you know. In your presentation, you can refer to what you have studied, lived, observed, etc.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

While many students were able to answer the question about the roles of art in a Francophone community that they know about and their own or another community, making successful comparisons, quite a few students had trouble addressing the idea of the role of art. In addition, some students had little to share about a Francophone community and thus had trouble establishing a clear comparison.

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

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Misunderstanding that the prompt is asking about “<i>certaines des rôles de l’art</i>,” which led some students to speak about art in general rather than some of the roles art—any art form—can play within a community, in terms of impact or influence on a broad level.</li><li>• Providing unbalanced responses by including a great deal of information about one culture and almost nothing about the other culture.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide effective treatment of the topic within the context of the task.</li><li>• Provide not only some information one or more forms of art but also explain the role these art forms play in a community they know and in French-speaking cultures.</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing lists of types of art or enumerating well-known artists and/or works of art in two cultures rather than comparing two cultures.</li> <li>• Not clearly identifying both communities being discussed (for example, referring only to “<i>ici</i>” or “<i>chez moi</i>”) or not identifying the target community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly compared the target culture with the student’s own or another community, including supporting details and relevant examples.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relying on stereotypes and superficial or inaccurate information about the communities discussed in the presentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate understanding of the target culture, including supporting details and relevant examples.</li> <li>• Strong responses were able to identify at least one aspect of the role played by art (e.g., cultural preservation, economic impact, architectural legacy, historical impact, tourism, means of communication) and compared it between two cultures.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not organizing the presentation in a coherent way, making the viewpoint of the student difficult to discern.</li> <li>• Not using transitional elements to contribute to the coherency of the presentation, or misusing transitional elements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an organized presentation, with effective use of transitional elements and cohesive devices.</li> </ul>

***Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?***

### **Completing the task and Time Management**

- Teachers should present a wide range of Francophone cultures in as much depth as possible from the earliest levels of instruction, using current authentic materials (print as well as audio, so that students will be exposed to different French accents from around the world) to ensure that students have a clear understanding of those cultures as they exist today that transcends stereotypes and clichés.
- Teachers should emphasize that an effective cultural comparison is not made up of simply two lists; the response requires that students both discuss their own community or another community as well as a Francophone community and explicitly articulate the similarities and differences between those two communities.
- Students should learn to be explicit rather than implicit in the comparisons they make between cultures. To help students with this central element of the task, teachers should provide them with effective strategies making comparisons: transitional phrases and grammatical structures that indicate comparison and the vocabulary to present one’s opinion. When introducing these strategies, teachers should emphasize how these tools can help students go beyond providing lists to increase the effectiveness of their responses.

- Teachers should explain to students that the organization of the response is of great importance; a clearly organized presentation, with transitional elements to help signal the structure, is more likely to be an effective presentation.
- Teachers should encourage students to make careful use of the four minutes they are allotted for planning and organizing their presentations. Some students spend too much time speaking about one community and clearly run out of time and are unable to develop a comparison with a second community.
- Teachers should emphasize the importance of reading all parts of the question so that nothing is overlooked or omitted and provide their students strategies on how to answer each part.
- Teachers should provide their students with opportunities to speak about all six of the course themes (and as many of their recommended contexts as possible) as they apply to their own communities and Francophone communities.
- Teachers should encourage their students to avoid overly general statements that could be applied to any prompt without including specific prompt-specific examples and details.

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

- The AP French Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the unit guides for building students' skills in the cultural comparison task model. This task model is specifically presented and practiced in all six units and is scaffolded to build students' skills and confidence over time. For example, in Unit 1, students give a one-minute cultural presentation about an aspect of culture learned in that unit; in Unit 2, they do a one-minute cultural comparison; in Unit 3, a full two-minute cultural comparison, and subsequent full comparisons on topics of increasing difficulty in units 4, 5, and 6. The CED can be accessed here:  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-french-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP French Language and Culture within AP Classroom. As noted above, the Cultural Comparison task model is presented and practiced in all six units (including multiple AP Daily Videos that focus on developing strategies for and practicing student conversations) and again in the 2021 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 8 and the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Sessions 3 and 4. AP Classroom may be accessed here:  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-french-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-french-language-and-culture>.
- Through AP Classroom teachers can access the AP Question Bank. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access cultural comparison tasks from previous exams. Teachers can also access three practice exams aligned to the 2023 Exam in the AP Question Bank, which provide additional practice for the cultural comparison and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Language and Culture online module on presentational speaking by Angelika Becker to learn about strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing presentational speaking skills. Teachers can access this online module here:  
[https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-speaking/story\\_html5.html](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-speaking/story_html5.html).
- Teachers should download a copy of the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP French Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance:  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-french-language-and-culture/exam>.



- Teachers should have students apply the scoring guidelines to student samples of cultural comparison responses posted on the exam page on AP Central to help them understand how the scoring guidelines are applied to student work.
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach German, Italian, and Spanish to determine what common shared issues there are across languages and to share strategies that will improve student performance.