



Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2023 AP[®] Italian Language and Culture Free-Response Questions

• Number of Readers	24			
Total Group				
• Number of Students Scored	2,034			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	471	23.16	
	4	463	22.76	
	3	548	26.94	
	2	347	17.06	
	1	205	10.08	
• Global Mean	3.32			
Standard Group*				
• Number of Students Scored	584			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	85	14.55	
	4	121	20.72	
	3	179	30.65	
	2	125	21.40	
	1	74	12.67	
• Global Mean	3.03			

The following comments on the 2023 free-response questions for AP[®] Italian were written by the Chief Reader, Beppe Cavatorta, Professor of Italian, University of Arizona. 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: Personal and Public Identities

Max Score: 5

Total Group Mean Score: 3.04

Standard Group Mean Score: 2.89

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. 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 response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme for the email reply was Personal and Public Identities (*Identità privata e pubblica*). Content and context were provided by Rodolfo Gaudio, Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology at the University of Lecce. The email highlights the many opportunities Italy offers to attend festivals, fairs, and folkloric events. In the email, the sender offers to assist students with the planning of their research trip to Italy. Students were expected to create with the language by using a variety of grammar structures and vocabulary appropriate to the context. They had to give information about themselves by answering two questions: the first about how they became interested in festivals, fairs, and folkloric events; the second about which time of the year they would prefer to travel to Italy and why.

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?

Content and Skills

The level of students' achievement on the task varied:

- Most responses had some or frequent elaboration, showing a certain level of familiarity with the cultural components of the topic.
- Few responses did not request further information about something mentioned in the prompt.

Language

- Most responses used a variety of compound sentences.
- Most responses included transitional words.
- The vocabulary used was generally appropriate, even though some responses mainly relied on vocabulary from the prompt.
- Many responses contained appropriate and varied vocabulary, though with some spelling errors (“*egrigio*”; “*piache*”; “*viagare*”; “*domandi*”; “*quando*”; “*tourist*”; “*experrenzzia*”; “*ricordo*”; “*interassata*”; “*spechifiche*”; “*avvevo*”), as well as a lack of accent marks.
- Most responses used an appropriate formal register with some shifts, mostly in the body of the email.
- Some responses lacked accuracy and control of grammar structures. The most frequent errors were in the use of articulated prepositions (“*di la*”; “*in la*”), article-noun agreement, adjective-noun agreement, subject-verb agreement, and verb tenses and conjugations. Frequent conjugation errors were noticeable in the use of the present (“*voglio vengo*”; “*voglio viaggio*”; “*celebraiamo*”;

“cominchio”), the simple past (“a nato”; “sono interessante”; “io incontrato”; “io cresciuto”; “il mio interesse nascato”), the imperfect (“leggeviamo”; “eriamo”; “celebraiamo”), and the future (“impararo”; “erò”; “vaggiero”; “rimanero”) tenses. There was frequent use of verbs in the infinitive tense.

- Some responses showed Spanish and English interference (“sangre”; “preguntar”; “planeare”; “avabilità”; “janario”).
- Most responses used idiomatic language phrases (“Non vedo l’ora”).
- A few responses used simple sentences or strings of sentences.

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

The directions of this task clearly indicated that the email was in response to an inquiry about a research trip to Italy. While most responses were appropriate, some of the responses did not talk about the research as the reason for the trip, but rather a desire to go to the beach or experience Italian ways of life.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many responses confused seasons with historical periods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses indicated the preferred season to travel to Italy and clearly explained the reason for their preference(s).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many responses asked questions about lodging, the possibility of bringing a friend or family members, and personal information about the sender. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses asked for information about the type of festivals and fairs, the best ways to participate, and the type of contacts the sender could provide.

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Teachers should do the following to help students improve their performance on this section of the exam:

- Guide students through the task’s instructions and ensure that they know and understand all its requirements: use of proper greetings and closings; answers to all questions; request for more details about something mentioned in the stimulus; use of the formal register.
- Explain the scoring guidelines for the task to students in order to help them become familiar with performance expectations.
- Help students familiarize themselves with the task and build their skills and confidence in responding by directing them to look for specific content throughout the email that they can use to ask for more information.
- Develop practice emails related to the six course themes, and have students write the response under actual exam conditions; score the responses according to the AP World Language and Culture Scoring Guidelines.
- Consistently use the sample email tasks available online on AP Classroom, in the AP Daily videos, and in previous AP Exams (2012-2023) available online on AP Central, for practice.
- Assist students who continue to struggle with the formal form of verbs, pronouns, and possessive adjectives and, consequently, with formal address. It would be helpful to focus on and practice the formal–informal distinction in writing and speaking through role-plays; to practice both reading and

answering business correspondence; and to practice everyday-life scenarios (for instance, conversations with one's doctor, a professor, a store manager, or an adult professional who is a stranger).

- Develop targeted vocabulary activities to provide students with more vocabulary resources, especially in relation to commonly-used words that have more than one meaning.
- Encourage control and accuracy in grammar and syntax by stressing the importance of gender and number agreement, subject-verb agreement, use of pronouns and possessive adjectives for formal address, and verb conjugations.
- Stress the importance of spelling and proper use of accent marks.
- Create opportunities for students to develop the habit of proofreading their work so that they can identify common lexical, grammatical, and/or syntactic errors.
- Encourage supportive peer reviews, reflection, and discussion of errors in order to avoid them in the future.

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

- The AP Italian 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-italian-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- Teachers should become familiar with the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP Italian Language and Culture within AP Classroom: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-italian-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-italian-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 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/story_html5.html.
- Teachers can download the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP Italian Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-italian-language-and-culture/exam>.
- Teachers can choose a sample email reply prompt from the posted free-response questions from 2012–2022 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-italian-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 French, German, 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: Global Challenges

Max Score: 5

Total Group Mean Score: 3.32

Standard Group Mean Score: 3.21

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 audio source twice. Afterward, they had 40 minutes to write the essay. Students were asked to clearly present and thoroughly defend their own position on the topic. They were instructed to integrate viewpoints and information they found in all three sources to support their argument. As students referred to the sources, they were supposed to identify them appropriately and organize their essay into clear paragraphs. The response received a single, holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme of the argumentative essay was Global Challenges (*Sfide globali*). Students wrote essays in response to a prompt that asked them to choose which objective is more important in buildings: comfort and convenience or sustainability. Students needed to support their response with evidence from the following sources:

- A newspaper article showing the results of a survey on sustainability and efficiency that highlighted the importance of efficient energy, ecological building materials, green spaces, and building and living in a way that respects the environment.
- An infographic illustrating the market for features of smart homes in Italy that compares price changes from 2018 to 2019.
- An audio interview with a real estate agent who discusses the Italian interest in purchasing new homes possessing modern conveniences (a concierge, shopping rooms, etc.), as opposed to rehabbing more traditional homes.

The prompt was proposed in the form of a question and did not require previous knowledge of the topic. The three sources provided students with the contextual and content support to develop their essay. However, students were expected to understand the main idea(s) and supporting details of the three sources, to discern some unfamiliar and idiomatic vocabulary by inferring meaning within the context of the source, and to comprehend paragraph-length discourse, vocabulary, and language structures. They were expected to demonstrate critical reading skills by identifying facts and data and interpreting the intent of the texts and to utilize that information to illustrate and support their argument.

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

Content and Skills

The level of students' achievement on the task varied:

- Most responses succeeded in demonstrating the ability to identify the main idea(s) and facts of each source, several supporting details, and the intent of the texts.
- Most responses demonstrated a moderate degree of comprehension of the sources.
- Most responses utilized the titles, subtitles, and introductions to the sources to assist in organizing and developing the topic and argument.
- Some responses did not integrate content from all three sources to support the student's position but often cited or identified at least two sources. The least understood and integrated sources were the second and third ones.
- Some responses did not provide an effective treatment of the topic within the context of the task because students were not able to correctly interpret the second and third sources while offering their own viewpoint.
- Some responses reflected a misinterpretation of source two.
- Some responses focused solely on the use of technology, or on technology in general, and neglected to connect the concept of technology to either sustainability or comfort concerning dwellings.
- Some responses presented the student's position but provided little or no development of it.
- Some responses presented summaries/paraphrases of the prompt without effectively integrating the information in sources in support of the student's argument.
- Some responses illustrated an ability to identify products and practices related to the topic and discern the perspectives behind them.
- A few responses addressed the prompt but not within the parameters of the three sources.

Language

- There was a general lack of accuracy and variety in grammar, syntax, and language usage.
- Most responses used appropriate vocabulary, indicating that students were generally comfortable with the topic; however, vocabulary could have been more varied.
- There were frequent errors in subject-verb and article-noun-adjective agreement.
- There was limited variety in the use of verbal moods and tenses; however, there was some use of the subjunctive mood and, when present, it was usually presented in chunks.
- There were frequent spelling mistakes and transfers from native language(s)/other language(s).
- Most responses developed paragraph-length discourse with effective transitional devices, using a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences; the majority of responses, however, used simple and compound sentences in paragraph construction.
- A few responses used rhetorical questions and emphatic exclamations to strengthen the argument.

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

The task required students to write an argumentative essay to submit to an Italian writing contest. The essay topic was based on three sources offering diverse information applicable to the prompt. Source #1 shared the results of a survey concerning Italians' viewpoints on the future of sustainability and efficiency in the construction of dwellings. Source #2 was an infographic that shared economic information about costs related

to investing in smart homes. Source #3 discussed the needs and desires of Italians in the real estate market, highlighting the importance of comfort.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The infographic in Source #2 shares economic information about the increasing investment of Italian families in various features of smart homes (security systems, home speakers, central heat/air, etc.). Some responses concluded that the infographic charted an increase in individual costs for Italian families rather than an increase in the investment in smart homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses correctly understood Source #2 and used it to support their argument on the importance of sustainability in the creation of dwellings. “<i>Seconda fonte numero due, il Mercato Smart Home aumenta del 40% dal 2018 al 2019. Il grafico dice che ‘supporto per la riduzione dei consumi energetici’ è importante per le persone.</i>”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the audio of Source #3, a few students confused the meaning of the words “<i>immobiliari/immobili</i>” with “<i>mobili.</i>” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses were able to understand that the words “<i>immobiliari/immobili</i>” relate to real estate and not furniture.

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Teachers should do the following to help students improve their performance on this part of the exam:

- Make sure students understand the nature and characteristics of an argumentative essay (thesis statement, topic sentences in paragraphs, evidence from sources integrated into paragraphs, and details that support both the overall argument and the points made in individual paragraphs).
- Remind students to carefully read the prompt and emphasize the fact that the essay is, above all, a response to it, while information from the three sources serves to support the student’s position on the topic as it relates to the prompt.
- Provide students with strategies to help them state their own opinion on a topic and construct their argument in a clear and organized manner, citing supporting evidence from all three sources.
- Remind students to carefully read the introduction, title, and subtitles, if applicable, accompanying the three sources.
- Develop strategies and activities that refine students’ reading skills, e.g., how to identify the thesis and supporting evidence in a source.
- Develop strategies and activities that help students recognize a source’s viewpoint while reminding them that sources do not necessarily express a position explicitly for or against a topic.
- Remind students that this task is read/scored by human readers, and therefore, clear penmanship is crucial for accurate scoring.

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

- The AP Italian 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 in Units 4 and 6, they write essays using three sources. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-italian-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 Italian Language and Culture within AP Classroom: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-italian-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-italian-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 persuasive 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 two AP World Language and Culture online modules on Presentational Writing; the first: Presentational Communication, A Focus on Writing, by Federica Santini, and the second: Building Students' Skills in Developing Effective Arguments, by Ann Mar, to learn some strategies that focus on developing students' presentational writing skills. Teachers can access these two online modules here: https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-writing/story_html5.html.
- Teachers should download the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP Italian 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-italian-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-italian-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-italian-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 persuasive (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 French, German, 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: Beauty and Aesthetics

Max Score: 5

Total Group Mean Score: 2.58

Standard Group Mean Score: 2.27

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

This task assessed speaking in the interpersonal communicative mode by having students engage in a simulated 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. The responses had to appropriately address each turn in the conversation according to the outline as well as to the simulated interlocutor's utterances. The series of 5 responses received a single holistic score based on how well they accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme for the conversation task was Beauty and Aesthetics (*Bellezza ed estetica*). For this task, students needed to respond to five audio prompts spoken by Gianni, an Italian friend who would like to attend Comicon, an annual convention focused primarily on comic books and comic book culture, with the student.

The task assessed students' performance in Interpersonal Speaking by engaging them in a series of exchanges on a familiar topic—plans to attend Comicon—generated by Gianni's inquiries. Students had to interact with the interlocutor to produce language that appropriately responded to Gianni's questions. They were expected to understand Gianni's utterances by relying on familiar vocabulary or by using context to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words. They needed to maintain the conversation in a culturally appropriate fashion consistent with the informal register. Moreover, the conversation required students to perform a series of language functions—answer questions and provide details; accept offers and raise issues; state opinions and express preferences; give advice—through simple, compound, and complex sentences and through the use of different time frames.

1. Gianni has reached out to the student several times, but the student has not replied to Gianni's messages. Gianni asks why the student did not respond, and the student had to answer the question and provide details.
2. Gianni talks about the costume that he is going to wear to Comicon and invites the student to attend the convention with him. The student had to accept the offer but raise a concern.
3. Gianni talks about some notable attendees who will be at Comicon and mentions his love of zombie stories. He then asks what the student would be interested in seeing. The student had to respond by expressing and explaining a preference.
4. Gianni worries that his mother might not allow him to be away for two days to attend Comicon and asks the student how he should convince his mother. The student had to give advice.
5. Gianni informs the student that the Comicon schedule is online and asks if the student wants to review it with him. He then invites the student to say where and when they should meet to do that. The student had to agree with the suggestion and indicate a preference.

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?

Content and Skills

- The topic, tone, vocabulary, and structure of the conversation were clear. Overall, the majority of the responses demonstrated that students understood the topic and the key words of the conversation (comic books, comic book culture, and activities related to media and entertainment) and showed an understanding of the specific meaning of the questions. The responses generally addressed each turn in the conversation according to the outline as well as to the simulated interlocutor's utterances in a suitable manner.
- In the second turn, Gianni talks about the costume that he is going to wear to Comicon and invites the student to attend the convention with him. The student had to accept but raise a concern. In some responses, students did not raise a concern.
- In the fourth turn, Gianni worries that his mother might not allow him to be away for two days to attend Comicon and asks the student to give him advice on how to convince his mother. In their responses, students frequently neglected to give Gianni advice.
- The fifth turn required the student to state where to meet with Gianni to review the online schedule together. For the most part, students provided information about a place to meet without making reference to reviewing the online schedule.

Language

- Most responses used basic vocabulary and some idiomatic language. A general lack of vocabulary resources affected the quality of the responses, especially in the fourth turn. The responses sometimes lacked accuracy and variety in grammar, syntax, and usage.

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

Students had to participate in an informal conversation on the topic of comic books, comic book culture, and activities related to media and entertainment. The course theme of this task was Beauty and Aesthetics (*Bellezza ed estetica*). Students had to interact with the interlocutor to produce language that appropriately responded to the questions. They were expected to understand the interlocutor's utterances by relying on familiar vocabulary or by using the context to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words. They needed to maintain the conversation in a culturally appropriate fashion consistent with the informal register.

Students had to maintain mostly uncomplicated communicative exchanges, answer questions and provide details, accept offers and raise issues, state opinions and express preferences, and give advice. For the most part, students maintained the conversation in a culturally appropriate fashion consistent with the informal register and provided responses that were somewhat appropriate within the context of the task.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the second turn, the student had to accept Gianni's offer to attend Comicon with him but raise a concern. In certain responses, students did not raise a concern and provided responses, such as: "Sure, I like Comicon and can't wait to go"; "I like Batman too, and I am going to go as Robin." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses included elaboration and followed the outline about accepting the offer and raising a concern, such as: "I would love to go but I have to see if I can change the date of a previous flight that I already booked."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the fourth turn, Gianni asked the student for advice on how to convince his mother to let him go to Naples to attend Comicon. In their responses, students frequently neglected to give Gianni advice, providing other information instead, such as: "We can stay at my uncle's house"; "We can go to a restaurant and spend some time with our friends." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses included details about what Gianni could say to his mother in order to convince her to let him attend Comicon, such as: "You can tell her that Comicon is in Italy for the first time and that you do not want to miss this event"; "Remind her that you are a good student, so you deserve to attend this special event"; "Tell her that I am going with you, so she does not have to worry."

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Teachers should do the following to help students improve their performance on this part of the exam:

- Make students aware that they will sometimes need to produce more than one language function in response to an audio prompt. Provide practice conversations that have students engage with two different language functions in at least some of their responses.
- Make students aware that they may be asked to deal with complicated situations or produce less familiar language functions, as described in the outline of the conversation (e.g., suggest an alternative, pose a problem, express doubts, express an opinion and justify it, ask a question).
- Have students practice informal, spontaneous conversations in class by providing them with topics and outlines that require them to greet each other, ask and answer questions, provide details, make a counterproposal, give advice, raise a doubt, etc.
- Encourage students to read and listen very carefully to the instructions for how to respond to the task, making sure that they make connections between what they hear and what is written in the conversation outline.
- Have students practice responding in 20 seconds. Encourage them to respond fully and provide details in order to use all their response time. Have students listen carefully to the prompt and say something relevant in response, even if what they say is brief. This sort of practice needs to occur throughout the school year.
- Provide students with strategies to use if they do not understand one of the prompts or get off track.
- Offer students opportunities to listen to a variety of voices of different genders. Appropriate audio clips from various media would be useful for students both in and outside the classroom. Many of these materials are easily accessible on the internet.

- As speaking instruction should not be focused solely on the conversation task, a variety of activities should be introduced into the curriculum, such as interviews and debates. Consequently, teachers should also:
 - Provide opportunities for students to respond spontaneously in a variety of situations and contexts. This will improve students' fluency and confidence in their speaking abilities.
 - Encourage students to pay attention to verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, and other language structures that may impede effective communication when incorrect. Encourage students to self-correct when they hear themselves making a mistake, as successful self-correction is always viewed favorably.
- Help students expand vocabulary by exploring many of the recommended contexts/subthemes of the six required course themes. Work with students to develop their skills in circumlocution so that they will be able to continue speaking even if they do not know the most appropriate word for the context.
- Assign the sample conversations from 2012 to 2023, available online on AP Central, under the same conditions and time constraints as on the exam, and then score them using the task scoring guidelines.

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

- The AP Italian 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-italian-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- 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.
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach French, German, and Spanish to determine what common shared issues there are across languages and to share strategies that will improve student performance.
- 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 Italian 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-italian-language-and-culture/exam>.

Question 4

Task: Cultural Comparison

Topic: Contemporary Life

Max Score: 5

Total Group Mean Score: 2.38

Standard Group Mean Score: 2.17

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 presentation had to compare an area of the Italian-speaking world to students' own community or another community of their choice, demonstrating understanding of cultural features of the Italian-speaking world. Furthermore, the presentation had to be organized clearly. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme for the cultural comparison task was Contemporary Life (*Vita contemporanea*). The task consisted of a question that asked students about the role of eating habits (e.g., consuming organic food, gluten-free food, local and seasonal food, etc.) in an Italian-speaking community with which they are familiar and in another community of their choice. Students had to plan and produce a spoken presentation, comparing an area of the Italian-speaking world with another community in relation to the given topic.

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?

Content

In order to demonstrate an understanding of different features of the target culture, students could rely on their previous and personal knowledge or first-hand experience or could recombine information from materials they saw, analyzed, and discussed in class. This year, although the course theme of the cultural comparison was Contemporary Life, students could make use of other disciplines and themes and subthemes inherent in the topic within the AP Curriculum, e.g., Families and Communities (*Famiglia e società*), in their responses.

Skills and Language

Responses were expected to accomplish the comparison task by organizing the presentation in paragraph-length discourse and using a variety of simple and compound sentences in major time frames. Vocabulary needed to be varied and appropriate for the context in order to make the presentation understandable. Also, pronunciation, intonation, and pacing helped to accomplish the task by making the presentation comprehensible.

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

The task required students to make a comparative oral presentation on the role of eating habits in an Italian-speaking community with which they are familiar and in another community of their choice. Most students were able to describe a variety of different foods but did not explicitly mention the role of eating habits.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few responses did not address the prompt and talked instead about subjects irrelevant to the topic (e.g., family, food, school, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses clearly addressed the topic of the role of eating habits in the target culture and in the student’s own culture(s).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses generally focused on the course theme (“<i>Tema del corso</i>”), Contemporary Life (<i>Vita contemporanea</i>), instead of developing a response to the specific topic of the prompt (“<i>Argomento della relazione</i>”). Therefore, in their presentation, some students talked about various similarities and differences between the two cultures but did not present a response to the specific prompt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In successful responses, students showed their understanding of the topic of the prompt through the description of specific eating habits (e.g., socializing while eating) in their answers, even when they did not explicitly discuss the role of eating habits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses provided a list of food being eaten in restaurants or other settings (pizza, pasta, hamburgers, etc.) in both cultures without any reference to food habits or their role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses were organized and generally understandable, with a clear comparison between the target culture and another culture.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few responses discussed the topic only within the target culture or their own culture without developing any comparison. 	

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Teachers should do the following to help students improve their performance on this part of the exam:

- Advise students to read the directions carefully and make sure that in their response they address the specific topic of the prompt (“*Argomento della relazione*”) and not the course theme (“*Tema del corso*”).
- Remind students that they need to address all aspects of the task by making a comparison between a community belonging to the target culture and another community of their choice and by including relevant details and examples.
- Remind students that the target culture must be mentioned explicitly by referring to Italy, Italian culture, Italian-speaking communities, Italians, or the like, and that they need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the target culture.
- Have students practice making connections among different topics so that they are prepared to address all elements of the 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 Italian 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/media/pdf/ap-italian-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 Italian Language and Culture within AP Classroom: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-italian-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-italian-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.
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach French, German, and Spanish to determine what common shared issues there are across languages and to share strategies that will improve student performance.
- Teachers should download a copy of the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP Italian Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-italian-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.