



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

• Number of Readers	1,327			
<b>Total Group</b>				
• Number of Students Scored	164,434			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	39,915	24.27	
	4	49,260	29.96	
	3	48,591	29.55	
	2	22,199	13.50	
	1	4,469	2.72	
• Global Mean	3.60			
<b>Standard Group*</b>				
• Number of Students Scored	24,603			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	4,255	17.29	
	4	7,002	28.46	
	3	8,372	34.03	
	2	4,119	16.74	
	1	855	3.48	
• Global Mean	3.39			

The following comments on the 2023 free-response questions for AP<sup>®</sup> Spanish Language and Culture were written by the Chief Reader, Scott M. Alvord, Professor of Hispanic Linguistics at Brigham Young 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:** Research Scholarship

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.65

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.60

### ***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, comprehend the message, and to write a reply. The responses received a single holistic score based on how the assigned task was accomplished. Students first needed to be able to comprehend the written message and then to write a reply using a formal register. The response is expected to address the questions in the message; elicit more information by asking a question; and it must include an appropriate greeting and closing.

The curricular theme for the email reply was “Beauty and Aesthetics.” The student was tasked with responding to Clara Martínez, director of *Fundación Arte y Vida*, a nonprofit organization that promotes the study of art, architecture, and history in Spanish-speaking countries. The student has been selected as a finalist for a research scholarship in a Spanish-speaking country and needs to reply by deciding in which discipline (art, architecture, or history) and where they would like to study.

The original email asks the student to respond these two questions:

1. If you could choose, in which Spanish-speaking country would you wish to do your research and why?
2. Which of the three academic disciplines mentioned previously interests you more? Explain providing details of your choice.

### ***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 interpersonal writing task by answering the two questions and requesting more information. Responses receiving scores in the high range made it clear that the student understood the meaning of the written prompt (i.e., that they were selected as finalists and that the decision to select the winners was not finalized) by using appropriate vocabulary and a variety of grammar and syntax. Successful student responses demonstrated a clear exchange of information using a formal register, usually in the form of an appropriate greeting and closing. Successful responses also included a question that was appropriate within the context of the email. Additionally, successful student responses demonstrated cultural knowledge of the Spanish-speaking country they selected in their responses.

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

The most common misconception student responses showed was a misunderstanding between being finalists and actually earning the scholarship. Some student responses also showed evidence of confusing academic disciplines (art, history, architecture) with disciplined behavior. The use of register was also not as consistent for responses in the mid-low range. Most responses in the mid-low range were either missing the request for additional information, or the questions being asked were only somewhat appropriate in the context of the email.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some lower-scoring student responses replied as if the student had already won the scholarship and was not a finalist.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher-scoring responses made it clear through their response and/or request for more information that the student understood that they were finalists and had to wait for a final decision.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some lower-scoring student responses demonstrated a knowledge gap in that they misinterpreted the vocabulary term <i>disciplina</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher-scoring responses appropriately answered the questions regarding academic disciplines with detail or elaboration (e.g., “<i>Mi mayor interés en disciplina académica es la arquitectura. Me gusta ver los diseños que tienen los edificios...</i>”).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some lower-scoring responses included non-Spanish-speaking countries in their response (e.g., Brazil).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses scoring in the high range demonstrated an understanding of the vocabulary term <i>hispanohablante</i> by selecting a Spanish-speaking country and elaborating why they chose to go there.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses in the low to mid range included an inconsistent use of register using <i>tú / usted</i> or <i>hola, hasta luego, oye</i>, and direct commands in the <i>tú</i> form (e.g., “<i>mándame más información</i>”).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses in the high range included consistent and appropriate register, including more formal language in greetings/closings (e.g., “<i>Estimada Señora</i>”).</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?**

- Teachers should train their students to read the instructions and the task (topic of the email), including the introduction, carefully to understand the context of the task and what they ultimately have to do, i.e., write a response to the email, including a formal greeting, answers to the questions posed in the email, a request for information, and a formal closing.
- Teachers should suggest that students check off each element of the task listed in the directions as they complete the task to ensure that they have addressed all the task’s requirements as they relate to the topic of the formal email reply.
- Teachers should teach students to infer implied meaning through context to avoid misunderstanding certain lexical words.
- Teachers should encourage students to elaborate in the body of the email. This could be done early in the year by having the whole class engage in the development of an email reply where the teacher keeps requesting more details and more elaboration without providing a set template for the students to follow. In this way, students will come to understand the expectations for this task.
- Teachers should encourage students to build in time to proofread their email replies to correct grammatical and syntactical errors and to check spelling, accents, and punctuation. When practicing email replies in class, students could engage in peer editing.

- Teachers should remind/teach students the use of formal register and provide numerous opportunities for students to use the formal register in spoken and written interpersonal communication. Students need to be reminded that the formal register is much more than simply using *tú* or *usted*. Students should be provided with samples of authentic emails to point out aspects of the formal greetings, use of register, and requesting information before asking students to write their first AP email reply.
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach AP French, German, and Italian Language and Culture to determine what common shared challenges there are across languages for this task and then brainstorm strategies that will improve student performance.
- Teachers should assign Email Reply prompts 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.

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

- The AP Spanish 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-spanish-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 Spanish 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 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 1. AP Classroom may be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-spanish-language-and-culture>
- Through AP Classroom, teachers can also access three Practice Exams in the AP Question Bank, which provide practice in the Email Reply and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should download the scoring guidelines for the Email Reply task available on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>
- Teachers should view the AP World Language and Culture Online Module on interpersonal writing, *Interpersonal Communication: Developing Writing Abilities*, by Nyan-Ping Bi, in order 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 should choose a sample Email Reply prompt from the posted free-response questions from 2014–2023 on the Exam Page on AP Central and access the corresponding 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-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>

## Question 2

**Task:** Argumentative Essay

**Topic:** Is Intellectual Capacity the Most Important Factor for Academic Success?

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.25

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.37

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

This task assessed the presentational mode of writing by having the student write an argumentative essay on a given topic while referencing the three sources of information provided as part of the question. 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 their essay. Students needed to be able to read and comprehend the two printed sources (an article and a chart) and listen to and comprehend the audio source. 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 essays into clear paragraphs. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The curricular theme for the argumentative essay was “Contemporary Life,” and it asked students whether “intellectual capacity is the most important factor for academic success.”

The first source, the article, “No todo es talento,” discussed the factors that contribute to good results in academic performance and to success in life. The article leans more against intellectual capacity as the most important factor for academic success and it also focuses more on personal success.

The second source, the chart, “Factores que influyen en los resultados académicos,” shows percentages representing professors’ perspectives regarding factors that impact students’ academic results.

The third source, the audio, is a presentation that differentiates academic performance and intellectual capacity. It presents ideas on multiple intelligences and emotional factors that can help in academic success and suggests that students should be encouraged to try different activities, e.g., art, music, sports, which can impact academic performance.

### ***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?***

Overall, students were able to successfully complete the task by responding to the prompt and clearly articulating a position on the topic that they were able to defend by using information from the provided sources. Because of the familiarity students have with the topic, given that there are many factors that may contribute to academic success in students’ lives, they were able to express their opinion, defend it, and provide examples.

Source 1 was especially accessible to students supporting the opinion that intellectual capacity is not the main factor that influences academic success. The article quotes experts and famous people who assert that factors other than intelligence have a greater effect on academic success. Source 2 was also accessible due to the short length and use of cognates, and student responses often used it to support that intelligence is not the most important factor for academic success. The audio source was also most often used in student responses in support of the argument that other factors, beyond intellectual capacity, are more important for academic

success. The most successful responses were able to integrate the sources into their essay, using information from all three to support their position.

Because all three sources leaned towards intellectual capacity not being the most important factor for academic success, most responses answered the question supporting this option.

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

Most gaps in knowledge seen in student responses were related to the comprehension of some of the sources' viewpoints. The lack of comprehension of the sources was varied. For example, reading comprehension was challenging for some students who didn't understand the viewpoints expressed in the article. Challenges in reading comprehension combined with not understanding data presented in the chart caused issues for other students. However, the most common gap in knowledge came from gaps in listening comprehension and understanding the audio in the third source.

Another knowledge gap seen in lower-scoring responses is the failure to integrate the three sources into the essay. Some responses resorted to mere copying of the text from the article without appropriately citing the source. Other responses failed to use the sources to defend their position.

Other gaps in knowledge in how to write an argumentative essay were apparent in language use (e.g., a lack of appropriate vocabulary and syntax) and organization (e.g., paragraphing and use of transitional elements).

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses in the low range demonstrated a lack of comprehension of the audio source, quoting inaccurately. Some responses used the information on the chart (source 2) incorrectly, demonstrating a lack of understanding of the professors' perspectives. For example, one response incorrectly stated that the chart claims that motivation is the most important factor in academic success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High-scoring responses developed a clear argument regarding the traits that most correlate with academic success that was cohesive and supported the student's point of view, integrating the three sources in support of their argument.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some lower-scoring students presented the student's personal viewpoints but used only one or none of the sources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful student responses showed integration of information from all sources and developed an organized essay.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses merely provided a summary of the sources without answering the question.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful student responses provided a clear position on the question and used the sources as evidence to support their claim.</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?**

- Teachers should help students clearly understand the task of writing and developing an argumentative essay in Spanish, including how to clearly and explicitly answer the question asked in the prompt and citing sources appropriately.
- Teachers should practice reading the prompt with the students highlighting key words or phrases that will lead to writing an effective argumentative essay based on the options given in the prompt.
- Teachers should show students the need to present their own viewpoint (based on the options given in the prompt) at the start of an argumentative essay.
- Teachers should show students the difference between integrating information from the sources in support of their own viewpoints and merely summarizing the sources.
- Teachers should focus on addressing lexical and grammatical issues that are applicable to writing about any topic. A variety of transitional elements would enhance organization and create a higher-quality essay.
- Teachers should develop students' skills and confidence by gradually scaffolding the argumentative essay task.
- Teachers might begin this task early in the year by having students just respond to a prompt with a strong thesis statement, then move to having them build a thesis supported by two sources and gradually have students write a three-source essay.
- Teachers should provide numerous opportunities for their students to engage in argumentative writing using sources, including authentic readings, graphics, and audios with different points of view.
- 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.

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

- The AP Spanish Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students' skills in writing successful argumentative 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 Units 4 and 6, they write essays using three sources. The CED can be accessed here:  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-spanish-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 Spanish 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 Session 8 and in the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 4. AP Classroom may be accessed here:  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-spanish-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 Dr. Federica Santini in order to learn about strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing 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 Spanish 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-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>
- Teachers should choose a sample essay prompt and its sources from the posted free-response questions from 2014–2023 from AP Central 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. Sample responses can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>



### Question 3

**Task:** Conversation

**Topic:** Discussing Plans for a School Film Festival

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 4.02

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.14

***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 curricular theme for this task was "Beauty and Aesthetics." The students were asked to engage in a conversation with Mariano, the president of the film club at their school, to discuss the organization of a school film festival. There were five audio prompts:

1. In the first prompt, Mariano greets the student and asks what kinds of movies should be included in the festival and why. The outline directs students to respond with details.
2. In the second prompt, Mariano affirms the suggestions and asks how they can promote the film festival so that it will attract a lot of people. The outline directs students to respond with details.
3. In the third prompt, Mariano explains that they have to prepare a presentation about each film so that their peers will understand the films better. He asks what information can be included and why. The conversation outline indicates that the student should respond and give an explanation.
4. In the fourth prompt, Mariano adds that teachers could help them with the event and asks how the teachers can help. The student is asked to respond with details.
5. In the fifth prompt, Mariano comments that in looking at the calendar he sees that the auditorium is busy on the days they had wanted the festival to take place. The student is asked to make a suggestion.

***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 found the questions to be accessible, and they provided a variety of answers that incorporated course themes by offering information related to visual and performing arts. Most students recommended specific movies and genres of films that could be included in the festival. The responses showed a variety of language functions, including identifying details, reasoning why, providing an explanation, and making a suggestion. The responses demonstrated a wide range of levels of appropriateness in terms of relevant content, amount of information, elaboration, and linguistic accuracy.

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

The most common issue in lower-scoring responses is due to gaps in listening comprehension of spoken Spanish, leading to inappropriate responses, the use of English words/movie titles, or the lack of a spoken response. Another knowledge gap was seen in the lack of familiarity with the task and using the provided conversation outline. Other common misconceptions were seen in responses that did not provide elaboration even though they apparently had the linguistic resources to do so.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in the lower score range were often inappropriate, as students were unable to comprehend the spoken prompts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in the high range showed a clear understanding of all or most of the questions, as evidenced by responses that were appropriate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responses showed a lack of familiarity with the format of the task, reflecting a lack of understanding of the context for the conversation provided in the conversation outline and the invitation to respond with details when asked multiple part questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in the high range reflected students' ability to understand and take on the assigned role and interact appropriately while following the conversation outline.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some weaker responses showed a lack of communication strategies, as students inserted words in English (e.g., “<i>advertismento</i>,” “<i>datos</i>”) when they lacked the vocabulary resources to express their ideas about how to promote the event or what information to include in the presentation. Some weaker responses also focused on the use of movie titles in English to give multiple examples when they did not have the language resources to explain their ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger responses included communication strategies like circumlocution, as students expressed ideas with known vocabulary (“<i>películas de superhéroes</i>”) when specific words were lacking.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responses in the mid-range showed control of grammar and basic vocabulary, but the lack of detail and elaboration prevented the student from showing a fuller range of language resources. These responses often recycled the cognate vocabulary in the prompt to express their ideas (<i>evento, calendario, presentación, festival</i>) rather than generating synonyms in Spanish.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger responses provided elaboration and detail by including more than one option, providing examples, and giving reasons to justify their proposals. These more expansive answers allowed students to demonstrate a wide variety of vocabulary and language use.</li> </ul>

- Some responses in the mid and low ranges misinterpreted the intent of the third prompt. The prompt asked about what information to include in each film’s presentation, but students responded with logistical information rather than content that would help peers understand the movies better.

- Some high-range responses were able to provide both an alternative location and time or date for the festival in offering a suggestion for the final turn of the conversation.

**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?**

- Students should be provided with many opportunities to converse spontaneously in ways that force them to interpret questions in real time.
- AP teachers should work with the vertical team to ensure that, starting at the Novice level, teachers design lessons that engage students in spoken interpersonal communication requiring negotiation of meaning rather than performing memorized dialogues for oral practice.
- Teachers should explicitly teach interpersonal communication strategies, including asking for clarification, requesting additional information, asking follow-up questions, and commenting upon responses. While not all these strategies are directly applicable to the AP Interpersonal Speaking task, they all focus on comprehension of the interlocutor, a skill gap for many of the lower-performing students.
- Teachers should explicitly teach interpersonal communication strategies of using circumlocution, adding detail and elaboration, providing examples and anecdotes. These strategies will help students to provide richer, more detailed responses, including more variety of vocabulary and grammar.
- Teachers should design activities involving role play and hypothetical situations to help students “think on their feet.”
- Students should practice engaging in functionally scripted dialogues to learn the names of language functions, such as ‘rechaza, acepta, responde con detalles, pide información, haz una sugerencia, da una explicación,’ etc.
- Teachers should explain the task structure and provide multiple opportunities to practice using the previous years’ interpersonal speaking task.
- Teachers should provide students with the opportunity to practice the speaking task with the same technology and in the same space that will be used for the AP Exam in the months prior to the exam. Teachers should verify that the quality of the recordings allows for accurate scoring. If there is a problem with audio quality, teachers should work with the AP Coordinator to provide an appropriate testing environment for the speaking portion of the exam.

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

- The AP Spanish Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students’ skills and confidence 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-spanish-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 Spanish 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 Session 1 and in the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 7. AP Classroom may be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-spanish-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 on interpersonal speaking, *Interpersonal Communication: Enhancing Student's Interpersonal Speaking Abilities*, by Clarissa Adams-Fletcher, 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 download a copy of the scoring guidelines for the Conversation task available on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance. They should select conversations from those available from 2014–2023 along with the provided sample responses. They should have students listen to the sample responses and use the scoring guidelines to understand how performance is assessed on the exam: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>
- Teachers should teach students how to use the conversation outline to their advantage. As you look at examples from previous years, point out commonalities from year to year so students can anticipate possible types of responses.

## Question 4

**Task:** Cultural Comparison

**Topic:** The Role of Ecological Habits on Society

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.32

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.24

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

This task assessed speaking in the presentational speaking mode by having the student deliver an oral presentation comparing an aspect of the target culture with that of another community. 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 the student’s own community or any other community to an area of the Spanish-speaking world, demonstrating an understanding of the cultural features of the Spanish-speaking world.

The course theme for the cultural comparison task in 2023 was “Global Challenges,” and the prompt asked students to compare the role of ecological habits in their own community or another community to those of the target community.

### ***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?***

Successful responses developed this presentation in varied ways by integrating knowledge of a variety of cultural practices and perspectives. Responses showed a variety of approaches with examples that included reflections on the impact of ecological habits such as: recycling; using bicycles to avoid driving cars; participating in beach and park cleanups; activities related to ecotourism; and sustainable farming. Other variations in customs were often treated as societal and cultural differences that affected people’s willingness to engage in climate-friendly activities and connected these trends to governmental involvement and support. The role of ecological habits was, therefore, developed in various ways, including environmental, political, economic, and personal motives.

### ***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>Some weaker responses limited their comparison to the activities listed in the prompt’s parenthesis.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Some higher-scoring student responses developed a comparison that went beyond the provided suggestions by elaborating on related topics such as ecotourism and sustainable food production.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Some responses only addressed ecological habits (instead of their role), which only partially addressed the question.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The most successful responses effectively and explicitly compared the role(s) of ecological practices in two communities with at least one of them being from the Spanish-speaking world.</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?**

- Teachers should make sure their students read the task and instructions carefully and address all of the expected parts for appropriate completion of the task.
- Teachers should remind their students about the difference between the task prompt and the AP curricular theme presented near the instructions.
- Teachers should train their students to always include two communities in their cultural comparison, ensuring that at least one of them is a Spanish-speaking community.
- Teachers should remind students that it is perfectly acceptable to compare a Spanish-speaking community to their own community or any other community, including another Spanish-speaking community.
- Teachers should present students with similar questions that contain two parts or multiple parts; and break the question down into its various constitutive parts: *cuál es el rol, hábitos ecológicos, la comunidad del estudiante u otra comunidad, and la comunidad del mundo hispanohablante.*
- Teachers should remind students that the list of ideas provided in the parenthesis are suggestions and should encourage students to generate other related possibilities to develop as supporting details.
- Teachers should model and practice the difference between implicit and explicit comparisons so that students can compare both communities clearly and in detail, leaving no room for ambiguity, confusion, or doubt.
- Teachers should work with the Vertical Team to ensure that from the novice level, students observe and compare cultural products, practices, and perspectives, as well as make comparisons between cultures.
- Teachers should expose students to a wide variety of authentic written, audio, audiovisual, and visual texts and encourage students to make observations and inferences about the target language culture.
- Teachers should provide effective strategies for making cultural comparisons. They should encourage the use of Venn diagrams or t-charts so students can organize their thoughts when preparing the cultural comparison.
- Teachers should provide instructions to guide students to better organize their cultural presentations by providing transitional elements and cohesive devices, especially those used for comparing, contrasting, and connecting ideas.
- Teachers should train their students in the speaking task using the same technology and location where they will take the exam early in the year so that students can become acquainted with the system.
- Teachers should verify that the quality of recordings allows for accurate scoring and that the correct recording has been saved. If there is a problem with the audio quality, teachers should work with the AP Coordinator to provide an appropriate testing environment for the speaking portion of the exam.

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

- The AP Spanish 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 1-minute cultural presentation about an aspect of culture learned in that unit; in Unit 2, they do a 1-minute cultural comparison; in Unit 3, a full 2-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-spanish-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 Spanish 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 2 and in the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 5. AP Classroom may be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-spanish-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: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Language and Culture Online Module on presentational speaking, *Presentational Communication: A Focus on 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 can select sample responses to cultural comparisons posted on AP Central from 2014–2023 and have students listen to them and apply the scoring guidelines to help them understand expectations for how this task is evaluated: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>