

2024



AP[®] Seminar End-of-Course Exam

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

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Part B

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End-of-Course Exam: Part B

24 points

General Scoring Notes

- When applying the scoring guidelines, you should award the score according to the preponderance of evidence (i.e., best fit).
- Each row is scored independently.

0 (Zero)

A score of 0 is assigned to a single row of the rubric when the response displays a below-minimum level of quality as identified in that row of the rubric.

Scores of 0 are assigned to all rows of the rubric when the response is off-topic; a repetition of a prompt; entirely crossed-out; a drawing or other markings; or a response in a language other than English.

NR (No Response)

A score of NR is assigned to responses that are blank.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 1 Establish Argument (0, 2, 4 or 6 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for 2 points.	2 points Misstates or overlooks a theme or issue that connects the sources. The response’s perspective is unclear or unrelated to the sources.	4 points Identifies a theme or issue that connects the sources. The response derives its perspective from only one of the sources.	6 points The response identifies a theme or issue connecting the provided sources and presents a perspective that is not represented in one of the sources OR brings a particularly insightful approach to one of the perspectives OR makes a strong thematic connection among perspectives.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
Typical responses that earn 0 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are not related in any way to any theme that connects the provided sources (ignores theme entirely, off-topic). Do not offer any perspective or claim (generated by the student). Examples that earn 0 points: Ignore the theme entirely <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Teachers can be really boring.” (with no further elaboration that connects thematically) Do not offer a perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Martin Luther King talked about goals.” 	Typical responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer a perspective that is unclear. Demonstrate a simplistic or mistaken understanding of the provided sources. May be dominated by summary rather than being driven by the student’s perspective. Examples that earn 2 points: Present a perspective that is unclear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Having bad grades is okay because it’s only bad grades.” “The goals you have should be inside you like a blueprint is like King said, and you should shoot for the stars because ambition is needed.” 	Typical responses that earn 4 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer a clear perspective that is derived from a single source or present a perspective that juxtaposes topics pulled directly from sources. Offer a reasonable understanding of the provided sources. Present a perspective that is trite, obvious, or overly general. Examples that earn 4 points: Derive a perspective from a single source <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “It’s important to have a well-conceived, ambitious plan for one’s life.” (Source B) “One needs self-respect to be successful.” (Source A) “We must have a good plan to combat climate change.” (Source D) Present a perspective that is trite, obvious, or overly general <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “You should always work hard and follow your dreams.” 	Typical responses that earn 6 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer a clear perspective that is either original or insightful. Offer a perceptive understanding of the provided sources used. Are driven by the student’s perspective. Examples of that earn 6 points: Offer an original perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Most high school athletes are being too idealistic when they believe they will reach their goal of playing in the NFL, NBA, or WNBA.” “Too often, parents discourage girls from setting high goals for themselves.” “The United States needs to develop pragmatic goals for implementing a minimum wage that allows people to live with dignity.” Offer an insightful perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “For our nation to implement a sustainable plan to combat climate change (Source D), citizens will need to imagine a new blueprint for their lives (Source A).” “The US places too much emphasis on going to college as a goal for students. This can have negative consequences if students do not live up to that expectation (Source B). It would be better to form more realistic and practical goals (Source D) for many students, such as obtaining an apprenticeship, to avoid the burdens of college debt.” 	
Additional Notes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A perspective is a “point of view conveyed through an argument.” Read the whole response before scoring as an on-topic argument may emerge later in the response. 				

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row 2 Establish Argument (0, 2, 4, or 6 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for 2 points.	2 points The line of reasoning is disorganized and/or illogical. The response lacks commentary, or the commentary incorrectly or tangentially explains the links between evidence and claims.	4 points The argument is mostly clear and organized, but the logic may be faulty OR the reasoning may be logical but not well organized. The commentary explains the links between evidence and claims.	6 points The line of reasoning is logically organized and well-developed. The commentary explains evidence and connects it to claims to clearly and convincingly establish an argument.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
Typical responses that earn 0 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are not related in any way to a theme that connects the provided sources (off-topic). Do not offer any claim (generated by the student) and/or no line of reasoning is present. 	Typical responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize the provided sources without linking them to one another or to an argument. Offer very general or confusing commentary, if any, connecting evidence and claims. Have a line of reasoning that fails. 	Typical responses that earn 4 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are organized well enough to discern the argument. Provide inconsistent or incomplete explanations linking evidence and claims. Make a claim that may be only partially supported. Have a line of reasoning that is difficult to follow at times. 	Typical responses that earn 6 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are driven by the argument; points are intentionally ordered AND the links between claims and evidence are logical and convincing. Are thoughtful or sophisticated (e.g., may address a counterargument, or discuss limitations or implications). Have a sound line of reasoning. 	
Examples that earn 0 points: Are not related to the theme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “My favorite animals are koala bears. They are furry and cute. They live in Australia.” Do not offer claims to establish a line of reasoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Source A talks about plans. Source C mentions a quest.” 	Examples that earn 2 points: Often stack overly general summaries of the sources without linkage to claims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Source B says that high expectations can be either good or bad. Source A thinks that it is very important to have a plan for your life, especially kids. Source C thinks that we’re all geniuses. This is important because our lives depend on it.” 	Examples that earn 4 points: Often jump from one claim to the next without providing a clear, logical connection between the claims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Our goals for climate change need to be more realistic. The best way for people to get to work is mass transit. People are using mass transit around the globe. This is not happening enough.” Often provide less than clear linkage between material from a source and their arguments’ claims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “In the poem “Quest,” the poet writes, “My soul contains all thought, all mystery, / All wisdom of the Great Infinite Mind” (Source A). We are all able to achieve great things because of our potential.” 	Examples that earn 6 points: Have a line of reasoning that is made explicit in logical transitions that connect arguments in a thoughtful manner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “While setting low expectations may help a teenager gain self-esteem, these easily attained goals can foster an undesirable lack of ambition.” “As we have learned from multiple perspectives, girls should be encouraged to participate in activities that demand physical strength, but we shouldn’t stop there. Girls need to be encouraged to use their physical strength in competitions at the highest levels.” Use insightful commentary to connect claims and evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Dr. King shines an important light on self-worth when he says, “If it falls to you to be a street sweeper, sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures” (Source A). In this passage, he supports the understanding that self-worth should be based not on what we do, but on how well we do it.” 	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>“Source B, relying on a comparative study of German and U.S. educational systems, understands that the “benefits of high expectations” are dependent on the cultures in which those expectations are set. Keeping this understanding in mind is important when we compare the success of people coming from different cultures within the U.S.”</i>
Additional Notes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Line of Reasoning is “an arrangement of claims and evidence that leads to a conclusion.”• Commentary is “a discussion and analysis of evidence in relation to the claim which may identify patterns, describe trends, and/or explain relationships.”			

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
<p>Row 3 Select and Use Evidence (0, 2, 4, or 6 points)</p>	<p>0 points Uses one or none of the provided sources.</p>	<p>2 points Repeats or misinterprets information from at least two of the provided sources, or the information lacks relevance thereby providing little support for an argument.</p>	<p>4 points Accurately uses relevant information from at least two of the provided sources to support an argument.</p>	<p>6 points Appropriately synthesizes relevant information drawn from at least two of the provided sources to develop and support a compelling argument.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
<p>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use only one of the provided sources. Do not make use of any of the provided sources. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw obviously mistaken conclusions from the sources. Mismatch claims and evidence. Offer evidence that has no bearing on the claims made. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present evidence that adequately supports assertions. Use quotations or paraphrases that generally match the claims. Interpret the sources in a way that does not substantially contribute to the argument; may pull data or information from the sources but do not utilize that information in a thoughtful or insightful way. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 6 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully integrate the source materials into the argument and put the sources into conversation with one another. May use a source to clarify points made in a second source, or to make a contrasting point, which is woven into the argument. Present evidence invoked to support the writer’s argument; the evidence is not the argument itself. Interpret the evidence in a way that adds substantially to the argument. 	
	<p>Examples that earn 2 points:</p> <p>Draw mistaken conclusions from the sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“The poem “Quest” is about travel and how we should try to go all over the world.”</i> <p>Mismatch claims and evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“There are many reasons for factories to reduce their carbon footprint. Source D gives several examples about how people can change their consumption. The fact of the matter is that we are ruining our planet.”</i> 	<p>Examples that earn 4 points:</p> <p>Use quotations or paraphrases that generally match the claims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“It can be very dangerous for young people to fall short of their goals. Source B says that this can “damage their self-concept, feelings of self-worth, and sense of competence.” It is important to be careful in this regard.”</i> <i>“Martin Luther King, Jr. gives helpful advice to any person about to graduate from high school. He says, “doors of opportunity are opening to each of you” (Source A). The next step is college or joining the workforce.”</i> 	<p>Examples that earn 6 points:</p> <p>Provide a thoughtful reading of the sources in light of their context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“In a speech given to middle school students shortly before his assassination, civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. offered an inspirational message. He urged these students to face life’s challenges with an ambitious plan. Using metaphors from architecture and construction, he told them that they needed a “good, sound, and solid blueprint.”</i> <p>Put sources in conversation with each other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“An inspirational poem written in 1922, “Quest” presents man as a noble creature with unlimited capacity for self-discovery. In fact, his achievement “out-distances the utmost star” (Source C). One hundred years later, energy scientist Vaclav Smil’s cynical interview about addressing climate change pokes holes in this kind of pretentious vision when he argues, “What’s the point of setting goals which cannot be achieved? People call it aspirational. I call it delusional” (Source D). Fortunately, optimistic people can find a reasonable middle-ground between these extremes.”</i> 	
Additional Notes				

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
<p>Row 4 Apply Conventions (0, 2, 4 or 6 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for 2 points.</p>	<p>2 points Contains many flaws in grammar and style that often interfere with communication to the reader OR the response incorrectly or ineffectively attributes knowledge and ideas from sources.</p>	<p>4 points Is generally clear but contains some flaws in grammar and style that occasionally interfere with communication to the reader. The response accurately attributes knowledge and ideas from sources.</p>	<p>6 points Communicates clearly to the reader (although may not be free of errors in grammar and style) AND the response effectively integrates material from sources into the argument (e.g. it is clearly introduced, integrated, or embedded into the text) and accurately attributes knowledge and ideas.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
<p>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are not related in any way to a theme that connects the provided sources (off- topic). 	<p>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use grammar and syntax that is so clumsy as to make the meaning difficult to decipher. Require multiple readings to uncover meaning or intent. Use blatant unattributed paraphrases and/or there is an absence of sources/quotation marks/reference to sources or their authors. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are written in a style that is adequate, if sometimes clunky, but conveys basic meaning. May contain multiple misspellings or other errors, but not so many as to impede understanding. May attempt elevated word choice but may be incorrect, or may lapse into colloquial language. Lack integration of sources Refer to sources/authors and use quotation marks or paraphrases appropriately. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 6 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feature writing that enhances the argument, are easy to read, and concise. Grammar and syntax need not be perfect. May demonstrate an understanding of the context of the provided sources. Weave source material effectively into the argument’s composition. Accurately cite sources (use quotation marks and paraphrases correctly). 	
<p>Examples that earn 0 points: Are off-topic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “It’s a nice day outside. My mother is walking our dog today. Have a nice day!” 	<p>Examples of that earn 2 points: Demonstrate writing that impedes understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The climate change was something. Rising temperatures and disaster. No one knows. It were always true that something happens this way, I can guess but those are another day.” “In the event that we are told what it is when we need to make this plan that was always in our mind then we should but that isn’t always the way we need to go about things like this I think or anything else. Source B.” <p>On multiple occasions, omit attribution and/or citation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “It is crucial that young people have a blueprint for their lives, and that blueprint should include a commitment to one’s own dignity. Without this commitment, someone could make them feel like a nobody.” 	<p>Examples that earn 4 points: Demonstrate writing that may be awkward, wordy, or grammatically incorrect, but these flaws do not impede understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Although high expectations are not always great in today’s society; this kind of standard can lead to discoveries that no one ever thought they could make.” “From the point of view of climate activists the use of fossil fuels are going to worsen over the next decade and we should be prepared for unpredictable weather patterns as well as rising temperatures.” 	<p>Examples that earn 6 points: Demonstrate writing that is clear, concise, and compelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “When teachers set high expectations for students, our communities prosper. Inspired, hardworking students find ways to give back to their neighborhoods.” <p>Understand the context of provided sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Though Carrie Williams Clifford’s poem “Quest” was published in 1922, her lofty pursuit of self-knowledge remains pertinent to a just society in need of thoughtful citizens.” <p>Paraphrase and quote sources correctly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “In 1967, America’s most famous civil rights leader pointed out that young people in that era would have many more opportunities than were available to their parents (Source A).” 	

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		<p>Omit quotation marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>“Source C wants me to believe that I am my goal, which is profound, and then later tells me that I must voyage far, which is also really deep.”</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>“According to Source B, “researchers have argued in favor of fostering ambitious expectations.””</i>
<p>Additional Notes</p>				

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Carrie Williams Clifford, in her work "The Widening Light," argues on behalf of intrinsic goals in one's life, stating "All wisdom of the Great Infinite Mind: This is to discover, I must voyage far, At last to find it in my pulsing heart." (Source C) The value of personal goals and ambition can be seen all throughout history, from Carrie Williams Clifford in 1922 to the "Little Engine that could." In today's ~~world~~ society, the importance of ambition regarding success has been blurred by the desire to quantify success in numbers, sparking numerous questions and debates on the role that encouraging ambition has on an American student's career after high school. As opposed to quantifying a student's success or value through numbers, guiding adolescents in the American school system to "follow their dreams" encourages higher levels of educational attainment and ~~and~~ aids in the establishment of a sense of place in American society.

Six months prior to his ~~assassination~~ assassination, ^(A) Martin Luther King delivered a speech to a Junior High School detailing the importance of constructing a "life blueprint." King urged the students in his audience to "set out to do such a good job... that the living, the dead, or the unborn couldn't do it any better" and find their passion, whether it be ~~an~~ astrophysics or street sweeping. Being a successful public figure despite his oppression, King's words were striking to young adolescent brains. Yet, the value of his words lied not in the students, but in the American school system itself, and brought to light

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the values the American school system instills in its students. Villarreal, Heckhausen, Lessard, Greenberger, and Chen with the Journal of Adolescence (B) delve into the subject of optimism ~~in~~ in education, the subject that King shared to his audience. They find that optimistic biases, or "optimism" and "ambition", have been linked to higher levels of educational attainment, subjective well being, and general health. To elaborate, Heckhausen and Chang (2009) found that ~~in~~ among American students, ambitious expectations, regardless of performance or resources, are most effective in producing high educational attainment (B). Thus, ^{it can be seen that} among adolescents in the United States, encouraging passion and ambition as opposed to numeric performance plays a large role in guiding ~~success~~ future success. ~~by~~

While ambition and passion are large catalysts for success in an American adolescent's education, many argue that promoting high expectations is a risky task. Villarreal, Heckhausen, and others in their ~~an~~ previously mentioned article reflect not only on the benefits of encouraging passion, but the cautions of promoting it as well. They share that due to the possible negative consequences of falling short of one's expectations, some educators have argued for a more "realistic" measure of ambition in academics and have cautioned against promoting high expectations in adolescents when there is a significant mismatch between performance, tangible resources, and a student's ambitions. The subject of "flying too close to the

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"Sun" is not only present in the school system, but modern society as well. Vaclav Smil, a renowned energy scientist, argues against optimistic expectations in the scientific field. Regarding scientific advancements, Smil ~~states~~ argues that blind optimism or a passion for problem solving will not lead to advancement, stating "People toss out these deadlines without any reflection on the scale and the complexity of the problem." While Smil's argument is on the topic of thermodynamics and 3-D printed houses, his words have significant relevance to the topic of aspirational thinking in today's schooling. Smil shares "I'm all for goals but for strict realism in setting them." which sheds light on the concerns regarding passion and aspirational thinking in a complex world. These concerns must be taken into consideration when regarding the goals a student must set for themselves so as to find success while also not setting them up for failure.

When ~~ambition is considered~~ taken into consideration, the concerns ~~on~~ on the topic of encouraging passion, goals, and ambition in American students are very real, as the ~~the~~ negative consequences of falling short of one's self-set expectations can be extremely detrimental ~~when compared to~~ ^{compared} to ~~those~~ those when a student gets a C on a test. ~~However~~ Yet, fostering ambition in schools should still be prioritized while being realistic. As stated by Villarreal and colleagues in their research, promoting high expectations in adolescents when there is a significant mismatch between academic

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performance, resources, and students' expectations can prove detrimental to a student's self-concept and worth. A solution to this may be providing opportunities for success outside the standard bounds of "success" like percentiles or grades. Malcolm Gladwell, in his world-renowned book "Outliers" details the factors of "success". He reflects on Bill Gates, the creator of Microsoft, and how his success could not be solely attributed to his inherent intelligence, but to the opportunities he was offered; he lived ~~in~~ in ~~an~~ a wealthier area near one of the few computers in the city, had volunteer and enrichment opportunities, and was ~~not~~ at the prime age ~~that~~ for learning code so by the time computers were a commodity, he already had his 10,000 hours. He had ambition and goals - yet, he also had the resources to foster his ambition. Providing students with opportunities to ~~do~~ explore their ambitions will help them to soar past the bounds of a letter grade. As Martin Luther King put it, "And I say to you, my young friends, that doors are opening to each of you - doors of opportunity are opening to each of you... and the great challenge facing you is to be ready to enter these doors as they open." Additionally, veering away from "quantifiable ability" like letter grades or numeric measures of success will allow for a student to set their own standards. Doing so will give a student the opportunity to ~~also~~ connect with their definition of success and fulfil their intrinsic definition of success. However, ambition or goals should be regulated and executed realistically so

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As to offer the student a full understanding of their capabilities and prevent ~~the~~ consequences of low self-concept or esteem - Overall, ambition and fostering passion in the American school system plays a large role in determining a student's success, as opposed to numeric ~~apart~~ definitions of ~~the~~ ability, as it helps a student to find their place in society and connect with learning.

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Goals are something we all have, something we all want, something we all yearn for or wish to reach. But, there are just some goals that we cannot reach that can sometimes be deemed "unreachable," "unattainable," or even "impossible." Having these goals could and possibly do more harm to you rather than help you, having such goals in mind could cause you to end up having a sort of fear where you'd do anything just to not fail hence having high expectations.

As noted in Source A, most if not majority of us have a blue print of what we want our life to be or how we planned/structured our life to look like similar to that of a blueprint for buildings. Each of us have our own paths and wish to focus on what we can do, or accomplishments, our goals. Everyone has a goal, everyone has a door, everyone has an opportunity. Hence, why if we trample ourselves with high expectations, multiple goals and more instead of doing ~~some~~ yourself any good all you'd do is cause yourself harm. At times, setting such goals isn't aspirational but more-so delusional, putting such a goal onto yourself will do nothing more but mislead you and make yourself believe you can do and reach such a goal when in reality you cannot; It is ~~difficult~~ difficult to accept the fact you may never reach a goal/expectation could bother, annoy or even make you feel like a failure but there are times where reality is needed to be faced instead of just believing you could do such a thing for your whole life only to be met with ~~has~~ a harsh reality and only then to you realize everything.

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According to David Marchese, who did an interview with Vaclav Smil, Smil is an author who worked on a book titled "How the world really works: The science behind how we got here and where we're going." Smil was interviewed about his newest publishing and questioned about his opinions where he responded to one of the questions saying "What we need is the dull, factually correct and accurate middle. Because only from that middle will come the solutions. Solutions never come from extremes... You have to recognize the realities of the world, and the realities of the world tend to be ~~unpleasant~~ unpleasant, discouraging and depressing." No matter how hard you work yourself, how many hours you spend on something, the goals you set up for yourself, in the end you have to face the harsh reality that you really can't achieve everything. It's best to ~~at~~ sometimes give up rather than continue working yourself to the bone ~~and~~ ~~and~~ eventually deal with harsh failure possibly even damaging your own feelings of self-worth, your confidence and sense of competence.

In conclusion, yes you could have goals and having such is always a great thing to have. But, there are times where it is best to face a harsh reality and accept the fact that you cannot reach such high expectations. It's best to do what you can and what you could do rather than do what you can't and instead be miserable for majority or even the rest ~~of~~ of your life.

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Begin your response to PART B on this page. Do not skip lines.

Source A "What is Your Life's Blueprint?"
~~In this article~~ By Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1967) This Article is saying no matter how big or small no matter what you are, be the best you ~~are~~ you possible. "If you can't be a pine at the top of the ~~tree~~ hills, be a scrub in ^{scrub} the valley. But be the best little ^{scrub} on the side of the hill. Be a bush if you can't be a tree. If you can't be a highway, just be a trail. If you can't be the sun, be a star. For it isn't by size that you win or fail. Be the best of whatever you are." Source B From "High-achievers' college enrollment goals: Costs and benefits of ~~and~~ ambitious expectations" By Brandilyn J. Villarreal, Jutta Heckhausen, Jared Hessard, Ellen Greenberger, and Chuansheng Chen (Journal of Adolescence, Vol. 45, Issue 1, 2015) This article gives more understanding on ~~an~~ early life and how failure might damage one's self worth. When held to certain expectations it can be hard to see the

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light at the end of the tunnel. Different levels of education can affect people in many different ways. Culture ^{and} long term ambitiousness both are strong factors in which determine the way ones life will go. "For example, individuals downwardly adjust goals to focus on those which are more attainable, use self-protective strategies to maintain self-esteem, or disengage from the goal altogether. These strategies allow the individual to protect existing motivational resources and re-engage with new and more attainable goals. Source C

"Quest" By Carrie Williams Clifford (The Widening Light, 1922) This short passage One being their "own" goal to truly know who one is and to explore the never ending space to voyage afar. "My goal out-distances the utmost star" simply applying their is no end to who one can be. Source D From "This Eminent Scientist Says Climate Activists Need to ~~Get~~ Real" By David Marchese (The New York Times, April 22, 2022)

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In this article there are two voices. One being Marchese (who is defending the beliefs of bigger and better) and Smil being the one who thinks humans imagine outside of their capabilities. I agree with Smilly and think something like

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End-of-Course Exam

Part B: Synthesizing and Creating Evidence-Based Argument

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

This question assessed students' ability to:

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

Sample: A

1 Establish Argument Score: 6

2 Establish Argument Score: 6

3 Select and Use Evidence Score: 6

4 Apply Conventions Score: 6

Row 1: Establish Argument

The response earned **6** points for this row because the response brings a particularly insightful approach to the perspective presented by Source B, while also capturing the essence of the themes of self-worth and achievement contributed by Sources A and C. The response presents the issue that “the importance of ambition regarding success has been blurred by the desire to quantify success in numbers, sparking numerous questions and debates on the role that encouraging ambition has on an American student’s career after high school.” After framing the status quo, an alternative approach is argued, and a prospective impact is posited: “As opposed to quantifying a student’s success or value through numbers, guiding adolescents in the American school system to ‘follow their dreams’ encourages higher levels of educational attainment and aids in the establishment of a sense of place in American society.” The perspective is perceptive, multi-faceted, and complex demonstrating an insightful understanding of the theme and sources.

End-of-Course Exam

Part B: Synthesizing and Creating Evidence-Based Argument

Row 2: Establish Argument

The response earned **6** points for this row because the line of reasoning is logically organized and well-developed. The claims are intentionally ordered (the response discusses the importance of an individual’s passion, the values of optimism and ambition in the American school system, and links to higher achievement; the response then addresses a counterargument—the “negative consequences of falling short of expectations”; then brings together the ideas presented in the first and second body paragraphs to connect to an outside source discussing the importance of resources to one’s success). The commentary on evidence is thorough and convincing while clearly connecting evidence to support claims. On the third page of the response, it provides commentary on the evidence presented from Source D: “...which sheds light on concerns regarding passion and aspirational thinking in a complex world. These concerns must be taken into consideration when regarding the goals a student must set for themselves so as to feed success while also not setting them up for failure.” (Which then transitions to the counterargument addressing the negative impact of failing short of expectations.) The line of reasoning and commentary build a clear and convincing argument; the argument is maintained consistently through the response, despite the length, the response never loses focus.

Row 3: Select and Use Evidence

The response earned **6** points for this row because the response demonstrates a sophisticated ability to synthesize and integrate sources into the argument in a compelling manner that creates interest and conveys understanding. While a response only needs to demonstrate a successful synthesis of sources once, this response does so several times. The response presents the idea from Source A that the path to excellence begins with discovering one’s passion, the response then presents evidence from Source B (“They find that optimistic biases, or ‘optimism’ and ‘ambition’, have been linked to higher levels of educational attainment, subjective well being, and general health ... among American students, ambitious expectations, regardless of performance or resources, are most effective in producing high educational attainment...”). The response then provides the commentary that “encouraging passion and ambition as opposed to numeric performance plays a large role in guiding future success.” The response also successfully synthesizes Sources B and D to form a counterargument. The response presents the idea from Source B that there are “possible negative consequences of falling short on one’s expectations...” and presented the idea that high expectations should not be promoted “when there is a significant mismatch between performance, tangible resources, and a student’s ambition.” This is synthesized with the idea from Source D that “blind optimism or a passion for problem solving will not lead to advancement.” The response then frames a quotation from Source D concerning realism: “which sheds light on the concerns regarding passion and aspirational thinking in a complex world. These concerns must be taken into consideration when regarding the goals a student must set for themselves so as to feel success while also not setting them up for failure.” The response consistently uses evidence appropriately and convincingly, while demonstrating effective synthesis, to support a compelling argument.

End-of-Course Exam
Part B: Synthesizing and Creating Evidence-Based Argument

Row 4: Apply Conventions

The response earned **6** points for this row because the response exhibits control of language and clearly communicates ideas. Integration of source material is effective and fluid (for example: “Carrie Williams Clifford, in her work ‘The Widening Light,’ argues on behalf of intrinsic goals in one’s life, stating ...” and “Six months prior to his assassination (A), Martin Luther King delivered a speech to a Junior High School detailing the importance of ...” and “Vaclav Smil, a renowned energy scientist, argues against optimistic expectations in the scientific field. Regarding scientific advancements, Smil argues ... While Smil’s argument is on the topic of thermodynamics and 3-D printed houses, his words have significant relevance to the topic of aspirational thinking in today’s schooling.” Attribution is consistently clear and effective.

End-of-Course Exam
Part B: Synthesizing and Creating Evidence-Based Argument

Sample: B

1 Establish Argument Score: 4

2 Establish Argument Score: 4

3 Select and Use Evidence Score: 4

4 Apply Conventions Score: 4

Row 1: Establish Argument

The response earned **4** points for this row because it identifies a theme that connects the sources (unrealistic goals) and offers a perspective that is from one of the sources (unrealistic goals can at times lead to harm).

Row 2: Establish Argument

The response earned **4** points for this row because its commentary on the sources produces a line of reasoning that is often unclear or repetitive. The first body paragraph presents a topic sentence connected to Source A (“As noted in Source A, most if not majority of us have a blueprint of what we want our life to be or how we planned/structured our life to look like similar to that of a blueprint for buildings.”) then presents ideas from Sources D and B then transitions to the idea of realistic goals. The next body paragraph begins with introducing Source D, provides a quotation, and then provides commentary on the quotation that partially links the evidence to the claim, but the reader must fill in some gaps in the explanation. Overall, the line of reasoning is discernable, but requires some work by the reader.

Row 3: Select and Use Evidence

The response earned **4** points for this row because its use of relevant information from the sources is limited to general support of its claims. Source A is used to set up the idea that “Each of us have our own paths and wish to focus on what we can do, our accomplishments, our goals. Everyone has a goal, everyone has a door, everyone has an opportunity.” Source D is quoted, and the commentary connects to only part of the long quotation. Nevertheless, evidence and claims are sufficiently connected to support the main idea.

Row 4: Apply Conventions

The response earned **4** points for this row because its language adequately conveys its meaning, though there is a loss of control at moments. The response attributes information and quotations but does borrow words from sources (e.g. “...setting such goals isn’t aspirational but more so delusional...”) without attribution. While the response attributes long quotations from and ideas from sources, it does not effectively integrate them (e.g. “As noted in Source A...” and “According to David Marchese, who did an interview with Vaclav Smil, Smil is an author who worked on a book titled “How the world really works: the science behind how we got here and where we’re going.” Smil was interviewed about his newest publishing and questioned about his opinions where he responded to one of the questions saying ...”). The Source D introduction provides a lot of information, yet the information does not demonstrate an understanding of the relevant context of the source. The introduction of the quotation also demonstrates a lack of control; the sentence is clunky, but adequately communicates meaning.

End-of-Course Exam
Part B: Synthesizing and Creating Evidence-Based Argument

Sample: C

1 Establish Argument Score: 2

2 Establish Argument Score: 2

3 Select and Use Evidence Score: 2

4 Apply Conventions Score: 2

Row 1: Establish Argument

The response earned **2** points for this row because there is little evidence of a perspective, and where it is discernible, the perspective is unclear. (“I agree with Smil, and think-”). The response is dominated by summary, never arriving at a clear perspective of its own.

Row 2: Establish Argument

The response earned **2** points for this row because its claims are not successfully linked to an argument (“This Article is saying ... be the best ...”; “This article gives more understanding on early life ...”). The response simply marches through the sources in the order that they appear, rather than organizing ideas into a clear line of reasoning.

Row 3: Select and Use Evidence

The response earned **2** points for this row because the evidence from the sources does not support an argument. The response provides a summary of each source, and then quotes the sources (in the cases of Sources A and B, at great length). The repeated information and lengthy quotations do not provide support for an argument.

Row 4: Apply Conventions

The response earned **2** points for this row because there is little original student writing, and a frequent loss of control of language. Attribution is apparent, but the sources are not integrated into the response. A missing quotation mark at the end of a long quotation makes discerning the quotation from the student’s writing difficult.