Chief Reader Report on Student Responses:

2024 AP® Italian Language and Culture Free-Response Questions

- Number of Readers   26

Total Group

- Number of Students Scored   2,246

- Score Distribution

Exam Score	N	%At
5	508	22.6
4	511	22.8
3	606	27.0
2	392	17.5
1	229	10.2

- Global Mean   3.30

Standard Group*

- Number of Students Scored   1,558

- Score Distribution

Exam Score	N	%At
5	199	12.8
4	369	23.7
3	496	31.8
2	327	21.0
1	167	10.7

- Global Mean   3.07

The following comments on the 2024 free-response questions for AP® Italian Language and Culture Examination 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: Contemporary Life
Max Score: 5
Total Group Mean Score: 3.76
Standard Group Mean Score: 3.68

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 the questions within 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 to ask for more details about something mentioned in the email. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme for the email reply was Contemporary Life (*Vita contemporanea*). Content and context were provided by Marco Salentini, Director of the Office of International Studies at the University of Bologna. The email highlights scholarship opportunities for international students to enroll at the University of Bologna. In the email, the sender provides information concerning study abroad opportunities at the university. 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 one regarding the course they would like to enroll in and why; the second one regarding the advantages of studying abroad in Italy. They were also required to request additional information. Stylistically, the students were expected to respect the appropriate register throughout the email response, including the opening and closing salutations.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) 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.
- Most responses demonstrated understanding of the task requirements although at times the language impeded comprehensibility.
- Very few responses did not request further information about something mentioned in the prompt.

Language
- Most responses used a variety of compound sentences.
- Many responses contained appropriate and varied vocabulary, though with some spelling errors ("*egriggio*"; "*piache*"; "*domandi*"; "*paesa*"; "*experienza*"; "*importissimo*"; "*perfecto*"; "*interessa*"; "*internationale*"; "*potentialmente*"), and 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 included articulate prepositions ("di la"; "in il"; "a Italia"; "in Roma"; "del vita"), errors in article-noun agreement, adjective-noun agreement, and subject-verb agreement, and errors in verb tenses

and conjugations. Frequent conjugation errors were noticeable in the incorrect use of present ("voglio studio"; "io piace"; "mi interesse"; "sappo"), simple past ("mi ha piacuto"; "lei insegnata"; "ha sempre stato"), future ("serà"; "piacerò") and conditional ("vorrerei"; "io interesserebbe") tenses. There was frequent use of verbs in the infinitive tense.

- Some responses showed Spanish and English interferences ("*suegno*"; "*pregunta*"; "*senor*"; "*avione*"; "*accomodazioni*"; "*improvare*"; "*topici*"; "*subjecto*"; "*prendere i corsi*").
- Most responses used idiomatic language phrases ("*Non vedo l'ora*"; "*penso che valga la pena*").
- Very few responses used simple sentences or sentence fragments.

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 study abroad program at the University of Bologna in Italy. While most responses were appropriate, some of the responses did not clearly explain the advantages of studying abroad in Italy.

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	Responses that Demonstrate Understanding
• Some responses combined the reason to study in Italy with the advantages of this experience. • Some responses misinterpreted the second question relating to advantages for studying at the University of Bologna/in Italy, i.e., students listed their Italian heritage e/o Italian studies as an advantage to earn the scholarship.	• Successful responses clearly explained the reason why the student wanted to enroll in the study abroad program, and the benefit this experience would bring.

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 all questions with details and elaboration; request for more details about something mentioned in the stimulus; consistent 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, from 2012 to 2024, 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 a professional adult stranger).

- Develop targeted vocabulary activities to provide students with more vocabulary resources, especially in relation to 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 accentuation of words.
- 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 such 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 all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP Italian Language and Culture within AP Classroom. As noted above, the email reply task model is presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5 (including multiple AP Daily Videos that focus on developing strategies for and practicing email replies) and again in the 2021 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 3 (AP Live Review) and the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 8 (AP Live Review). AP Classroom may be accessed here: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-italian-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-italian-language-and-culture.
- Through AP Classroom, teachers can also access the AP Question Bank. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access email replies from previous exams. Teachers can also access three practice exams aligned to the 2024 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 exchange ideas, ask for suggestions, and discuss with high school colleagues in the AP Community here: https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org.
- Teachers can view the AP World Languages and Cultures 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 2012–2024 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 common issues 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: 3.41
Standard Group Mean Score: 3.28

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 take a stance regarding best practices in solving the pollution caused by plastics (manufacturing, material, and packaging). Students needed to sustain their response with evidence from the following sources:

- An excerpt from Antonio Giangrande's book describing a new EU research project aimed to reduce the use of plastic products through recycling. The main argument of the article maintains that plastic is a material that, if recycled properly, will create a circular economy reducing pollution. Besides aligning with this stance, the response of the Italian industrial sector has begun producing a new plastic material that is lighter and creates a much smaller environmental footprint.
- An infographic by Enrico Messina, an Italian journalist published in 2019, illustrating the increase of the production of plastic materials in diverse economic sectors from the 1950s to 2015.
- An interview (audio file) with Alberto Bellini, professor in the Dept. of Electrical Engineering and Information Science at the University of Bologna published in 2019. Bellini argues that recycling is not enough to help environmental damage, rather society must reduce the use of plastics.

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. Students were expected to understand the main idea(s) and supporting details of the three sources, discern some unfamiliar and idiomatic vocabulary by inferring meaning within the context of the source, and comprehend paragraph-length discourse, vocabulary, and 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 cultivate and illustrate their argument.

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 the students' achievement on the task varied:
- Most responses succeeded in demonstrating the ability to identify the main idea(s) and arguments of each source, several supporting details, and the intent of the texts.
- Most responses demonstrated a high degree of comprehension of the sources, including the audio in source three.
- Most responses utilized the titles 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 they often cited or identified at least two sources.
- Some responses did not provide an effective treatment of the topic within the task's context because students could not correctly interpret the sources while offering their own viewpoint.
- Some responses reflected a misinterpretation of source three.
- Some responses presented the student's position, but there was little or no development of it.
- Some responses presented summaries/paraphrases/long citations of the sources without effectively integrating the information in support of the student's argument.
- Some responses illustrated the ability to identify products and practices related to the topic and discern the perspectives behind them.
- A few responses did address the prompt, but not within the parameters of the three sources.

Language
- Most responses developed paragraph-length discourse with effective transitional devices, using a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences; however, most responses used simple and compound sentences in paragraph construction.
- Most responses used appropriate vocabulary, indicating that students were generally comfortable with the topic; however, vocabulary could have been more varied ("*parla che*"; "*ricicolo*"; "*ricicletta*"; "*soluzionare*").
- There was a general lack of accuracy and variety in grammar, syntax, and language usage.
- There were frequent errors in subject-verb and article-noun-adjective agreement ("la problema"; "*della plastici*"; "*questi soldi puo sere usato*"; "*le plastiche nel mondo aumente*"; "*molti organizzazioni usare e crea*").
- There was limited variety in the use of verbal moods and tenses, however, there was some use of the subjunctive and conditional moods to express an opinion on the possibility of decreasing pollution when recycling or reusing of plastic is implemented ("*domandando se questa sia effettiva*"; "*se invece non sarebbe meglio*"; "*il miglior modo per ridurre l'inquinamento sarebbe*").
- There were frequent spelling mistakes ("*polluzione*"; "*beneficiale*") and transfers from native language(s)/other language(s) ("*ser*"; "*hay*").
- There were some responses where the use of Italian idioms was forced and not effective for the integration of the source ("*Il costo di un occhio della testa e riduzione della plastici è benefico*").
- A few responses used rhetorical questions 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 described a new EU research project aimed at reducing the use of plastic products through recycling. Source #2 was an infographic illustrating the increase of the production of plastic materials in diverse economic sectors. Source #3 discussed that recycling is not enough to help environmental damage, but rather we must reduce the use of plastics.

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	*Responses that Demonstrate Understanding*
• In the introduction to Source #3, the professor speaking in the audio is Alberto Bellini, from the "Guglielmo Marconi" Department. Some students cited Guglielmo Marconi as the name of a professor at the University of Bologna.	• Successful responses correctly understood the reference to the name of the department and used it to refer to the place where Professor Alberto Bellini works: *Dipartimento di Ingegneria dell'Energia Elettrica e dell'informazione "Guglielmo Marconi."*
• The audio in Source #3 illustrates how the use of plastic in CDs and DVDs for music and films had dramatically changed when it switched to online streaming. Some responses concluded that Italians going to the movies or listening to music in a social setting led to a healthier planet.	• Successful responses correctly understood Source #3 and indicated the switch to online streaming as a successful way to reduce the use of plastic for listening to music or watching movies.

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 examination:
- 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.

- Expose students to authentic materials to develop their interpretive skills from the first level of Italian.
- Develop written production activities since the first level of Italian to scaffold the students' written production skills.

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 AP Task questions where teachers can find and access persuasive essay tasks. Teachers can also access three practice exams aligned to the 2024 Exam in the AP Question Bank as well as in the AP Course Audit, which provide additional practice with the essay task and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should use the AP Daily and the AP Live Review Videos in AP Classroom, either in the classroom as part of their lesson or as homework assignment for students: the AP Daily Videos focus on specific tasks and are mini lessons that also provide additional practice not included in the AP Question Bank and task specific strategies. The AP Daily Videos for the Argumentative Essay can be found in Units 2, 4, 6: https://myap.collegeboard.org.
- Teachers should view the AP World Language and Culture online module on Presentational Writing: Presentational Communication, A Focus on Writing, by Federica Santini, to learn some strategies that focus on developing students' presentational writing skills. Teachers can access the online module 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 2012–2024 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 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. Teachers can exchange ideas, ask for suggestions, and discuss with high school colleagues in the AP Community here: https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org.

Question 3

Task: Conversation
Topic: Beauty and Aesthetics
Max Score: 5
Total Group Mean Score: 3.22
Standard Group Mean Score: 2.96

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 five 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 five 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 Anna, an Italian classmate who would like to discuss the end of the scholastic year's events. The task assessed students' performance in Interpersonal Speaking by engaging them in a series of exchanges on a familiar topic—the end of the scholastic year's performance—generated by Anna's inquiries. Students had to interact with the interlocutor to produce language that appropriately responded to Anna's questions. They were expected to understand Anna'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; respond negatively and provide an alternative; state opinions and express preferences; give advice—through simple, compound, and complex sentences, and through the use of different time frames.

1. Anna has been selected to participate in the end of the year school play. She is excited and asks her friend in which of the end of the year events would the interlocutor prefer to perform.

2. Anna responds positively and states that she is nervous and anxious about forgetting her lines. Because of this, she asks the interlocutor to help her rehearse that same day after school.

3. Anna responds positively and admires the interlocutor's serendipity before performing. Then she asks the interlocutor's secret to remaining relaxed/calm.

4. Anna responds excitedly and shares her dream of stardom as an actress after studying theatre in Rome. Anna asks the interlocutor about their plans after high school.

5. Anna wishes them "good luck" and returns the conversation to the end of the year events. She shares her intention of inviting a large group of people and asks the interlocutor who they will invite to the event.

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 the students understood the topic and the key words of the conversation (year-end performance and post-secondary plans) and showed an understanding of the specific meaning of the questions. The responses addressed each turn in the conversation according to the outline as well as the simulated interlocutor's utterances in a suitable manner.
- In Turn 1, Anna asks the student which of the three year-end exhibitions they plan to choose. The student had to respond in detail, but in some responses, students interpreted the question as an invitation to attend one of these events, sometime outside the context of the high school.
- In Turn 2, Anna asks the student to help her rehearse that day after school. The student had to respond negatively and offer an alternative, but in some responses, students instead accepted to help her immediately/after school.
- In Turn 3, Anna asks the student their secret to remaining calm. The student had to respond with an explanation. Some responses misunderstood the expression "*mantenere la calma.*"
- In Turn 4, Anna asks the student about their post-secondary plans. In their responses, students occasionally responded without giving a reason for their choice.
- In Turn 5, the student was required to state who they might invite to their year-end exhibition. In some responses, a misunderstanding from Turn 1 caused a similar misunderstanding here.

Language
- Most responses used basic vocabulary and some idiomatic language. A general lack of vocabulary resources affected the quality of the responses, especially in Turn 2.
- 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 a familiar topic related to artistic performances in a high school context, specifically end-of-year events such as visual art exhibitions, concerts, poetry readings, and theatrical presentations. The course topic was Beauty and Aesthetics (*Bellezza ed estetica*). They 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, decline invitations and offer alternatives, and explain their opinions. For the most part, students generally 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.

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	Responses that Demonstrate Understanding
• In Turn 1, Anna asks the student which of the three year-end exhibitions they plan to choose: submit a painting for an art exhibit, play in a concert, or participate in a poetry reading. The student had to respond in detail, but in some responses, students interpreted the question as an invitation to attend one of these events, sometime outside the context of the high school. "*I usually don't want to go to art exhibitions but last year I saw a museum.*" And in other instances, students interpreted year-end as a reference to New Year's Eve, such as: "*I celebrate at home with my family and friends and we watch the ball drop.*"	• Successful responses included elaboration and followed the outline about choosing one of the three options, such as: "*I can read poetry because I like it a lot… I think I can read a Shakespeare poem.*"
• Turn 2 asked the students to tell Anna that they were not able to help her rehearse after school and to offer an alternative. In their responses, students frequently responded affirmatively, such as: "*Yes, I can help with your answer [sic.] because it's very difficult.*" Or only declined the offer "*I am very busy with homework . . I have to cook dinner . .*"	• Successful responses included elaboration and offered alternatives for Anna to rehearse, such as "*I'm sorry but my friend Maria is a good actress and she can help you with your part tomorrow after school.*"
• In Turn 3, Anna asks students their secret for remaining calm. This required the most creative reply and was the part of the conversation students most commonly left blank.	• Successful responses included various strategies for Anna, such as "*I like to talk with my friends or my sister.*" and "*I like to read a book or I think about my future vacation to relax.*" And some included specific references to the previous turn of the conversation: "*It's not difficult . . . I like the theater and when I was little I rehearsed with my friends, my family and my mom.*"
	• Turn 4 was the most successful element of the conversation featuring a question that is very familiar to students: "*What do you think you will do after high school?*" Successful responses focused on summer activities and future plans for work or study: "*I think I'll be a doctor because I like to study medicine and I want to help many people.*" and "*After high school I think that I can visit Venice.*"
• In Turn 5, Anna asks the student who they will invite to the year-end exhibitions. The student	• Successful responses included lists of invitees and motivations for their presence at the year-

had to respond in detail, but in some responses, students interpreted the question as an invitation to another event or a continuation of the previous question. "*I celebrate with my family and friends.*" And in other instances, students interpreted year-end as a reference to the end of the year (some calendar, i.e., New Year's Eve, others scholastic) such as: "*University is a lot of fun. I want to study more after high school.*"

end exhibition, such as "*I want to invite my friends and my sister. My sister wants to be an actress too.*" And replies including a farewell phrase, "*I can invite my family. Bye, Anna.*"

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 sometimes they need to produce more than one language function in response to an audio prompt turn in this task. Provide practice conversations that have students engage with two language functions in at least some of their responses (decline a request or invitation and then offer an alternative).
- Make students aware that they may be asked to deal with some complicated situations or less familiar
- language functions, as described in the outline of the conversation (pose a problem, express doubts, express an opinion and justify it, negate an invitation, ask a question).
- Have students practice informal, spontaneous conversations in class by providing them with topics and outlines that require them to greet, answer and ask questions, provide details, make counterproposals, give advice, raise doubts, etc.
- Encourage students to study the written instructions carefully including the introduction and the required content for their responses. They should ensure 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 provide elaboration and details and to fully use 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 some strategies to use if they do not understand one of the prompts or get off track.
- Offer students opportunities to listen to a wide variety of voices of different tones, timbres, and pitches. 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 the speaking component in the classroom should not be solely focused 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 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 have the most appropriate word for the context.

- Assign the sample conversations from 2014 to 2024 available online on AP Central under the same conditions and time constraints as on the exam and then score them using the exam scoring guidelines (feedback provided 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 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/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. 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 7 and the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 8. AP Classroom may be accessed here: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-italian-language-and-culture/classroom-resources.
- 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 2024 Exam in the AP Question Bank, which provide additional practice for the conversation task and can be scored using the scoring guidelines provided.
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Languages and Cultures 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 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/media/pdf/ap23-sg-italian-language.pdf.
- Teachers should teach students how to use the conversation outline to their advantage. Look at commonalities from year to year so that students can anticipate possible types of questions and responses.
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach French, German, and Spanish to determine common issues across languages and to share strategies that will improve student performance. Teachers can exchange ideas, ask for suggestions, and discuss with high school colleagues in the AP Community here: https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/.

Question 4

Task: Cultural Comparison
Topic: Contemporary Life
Max Score: 5
Total Group Mean Score: 2.94
Standard Group Mean Score: 2.78

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

This task assessed speaking in the presentational communicative mode by having the student deliver 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 the 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 clearly organized. 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 public celebrations (e.g., institutional, national, or religious holidays, fairs, historical reenactments, etc.) in an Italian-speaking community with which they are familiar and/or in another community of their choice. Students had to organize, prepare, 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 as well as 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, it was expected that pronunciation, intonation, and pacing would contribute to 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 public celebrations in an Italian-speaking community with which they are familiar and in another community of their choice. Most of the students were able to list a variety of diverse holidays, festivals, and festivities, but did not explicitly mention the role of such celebrations.

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	*Responses that Demonstrate Understanding*
• A few responses did not address the prompt and focused instead on topics irrelevant to the prompt (e.g., family life, fashion, food, language, school, etc.).	• Successful responses clearly addressed the role of public celebrations in the target culture and in the student's own culture(s)/community of choice ("*io penso che queste celebrazioni sono importanti perché questo è un tempo in dove non devono essere stressati e possono rilassarsi .. tutto .. ehm .. tutto e anche .. tutta la familia può essere felice ehm .. questo è vero in Italia e neli Stati Uniti*").
• Some responses provided a list of national or religious festivities/festivals (*Carnevale*, Halloween, *Natale*, Christmas, *Sanremo*, *Coachella*, Mardi Gras, etc.) in both cultures, and specific Italian religious celebrations such as *onomastico* (nameday), without any reference to the role of these celebrations.	• Successful responses displayed the student's understanding of the function/purpose of public celebrations within the target culture ("*da .. Ferragosto in dove chiudono .. le persone in Italia chiudono i negozi e .. e .. questo fa uhm perché le persone possono cele .. celebrare tutti insieme*").
• A few responses discussed the topic only within the target culture or their own culture, without developing any comparison.	• Successful responses were organized and generally understandable, with a clear comparison between the target culture and another culture that showed an understanding of the cultural features of the target culture ("*io penso che uhm queste celebrazioni sono importanti perché questo è un tempo in dove non devono essere stressati e possono rilassarsi .. tutto .. uhm .. tutto e anche .. tutta la familia può essere felice uhm .. questo è vero in Italia e negli Stati Uniti*").

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*") or the instructions in the boxes.

- Remind students about the meaning of "*ruolo*" in the prompt and to integrate this function in their presentation. Remind students that they need to address all aspects of this task by comparing a community belonging to the target culture and another community of their choice 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.
- Have students practice the use of transitional elements or cohesive devices.

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 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/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 2022 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 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.
- 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 can exchange ideas, ask for suggestions, and discuss with high school colleagues in the AP Community here: https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org.