



## Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2024 AP<sup>®</sup> Spanish Language and Culture Free-Response Questions

• Number of Readers	1,473			
<b>Total Group</b>				
• Number of Students Scored	177,819			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	37,662	21.2	
	4	55,833	31.4	
	3	54,003	30.4	
	2	24,900	14.0	
	1	5,421	3.0	
• Global Mean	3.54			
<b>Standard Group*</b>				
• Number of Students Scored	48,576			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	7,882	16.2	
	4	14,350	29.5	
	3	16,357	33.7	
	2	8,150	16.8	
	1	1,837	3.8	
• Global Mean	3.38			

The following comments on the 2024 free-response questions for AP<sup>®</sup> Spanish Language and Culture were written by the Chief Reader Rosa Tapia, Professor of Spanish, Latin American and Latinx Studies at Lawrence University. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

## Question 1

**Task:** Email

**Topic:** Hispanic Heritage Month Activities

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.56

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.43

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

This task assessed writing in the interpersonal communicative mode by prompting the student to write a reply to an email message. Students were allotted 15 minutes to read, understand the message, and write a reply. The responses received a single holistic score based on how the task was accomplished, that is, how appropriately they responded to the email. Students had to comprehend the message first and then write a reply using a formal register. The response is expected to address the questions in the message, elicit more information by asking a question, and include an appropriate greeting and closing.

The curricular theme for the email reply was “Families and Communities.” The student was tasked with responding to Alejandra Montoya, the director of Academia José Martí. The student was contacted because Ms. Montoya’s school is planning various activities to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and they request suggestions for other activities to include in the initiative that will highlight achievements and other contributions made by Latino communities in the United States.

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

1. What activity would be important to include in this year’s celebration, and why?
2. How can we encourage our community to participate in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month?

### ***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?***

Most students completed the interpersonal writing task by answering the two questions in the email and requesting more information. Responses that received scores in the high range made it clear that the student understood the meaning of the written prompt (i.e., they were contacted by a school director requesting suggestions for celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month) by including ideas for activities that highlighted contributions made by famous Latinos such as César Chávez. In addition, students included suggestions such as the importance of tradition for Latino families when they celebrate Three Kings Day, *El Día de los Reyes Magos*. In addition, responses receiving scores in the high range included appropriate vocabulary and a variety in grammar and syntax. Lastly, responses in the higher scoring range included frequent elaboration throughout their response, providing details about the featured figure, event, or aspect. Successful student responses demonstrated a clear exchange of information using a formal register, usually in the form of an appropriate greeting and closing. Successful responses also included a question that was pertinent within the context of the email. Additionally, successful student responses demonstrated cultural knowledge of Latino community achievements and contributions in the United States by highlighting specific examples such as historical figures, foods, holidays, and traditional events and explaining why they should be included in the month-long celebrations and how they could help engage the community.

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

The most common challenge was being able to appropriately refer to relevant activities to highlight Latino contributions and also identify pertinent strategies or actions to encourage the community to partake in the initiative. In the mid-low range, responses were not as complete or they failed to give a distinct answer to the two questions, often providing suggestions for generic celebratory or communal activities without indicating their purpose. Meanwhile, responses scoring in the high scoring range were able to logically connect the answers to both questions by suggesting relevant activities and elaborating on how these could attract the community.

The use of register was also not as appropriate or consistent for responses in the mid-low range, which sometimes used colloquial expressions or casual forms of address. Most responses of this kind either failed to request additional information or did it in a way that was only partially appropriate within the context of the email and the task, sometimes misunderstanding the language or the intent of a question. In contrast, responses scoring in the higher range were able to successfully connect the idea of encouraging the community to participate by entertaining them with Latino related activities and/or traditions.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some student responses failed to connect their suggested activity to the contributions of Latino communities in the United States and/or to strategies for engaging the community. These responses tended to provide general ideas for events and activities without explaining why.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher scoring student responses provided clear suggestions for events and activities and why their ideas should be considered. These responses clearly connected the proposed activity with the achievements and contributions of the Latino community in the United States. <i>“Con respecto a su primera pregunta considero que es importante incluir el día de los reyes magos debido a que esta celebración es mucho más grande que Navidad en varios países Hispánicos...”</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many mid-low range student responses did not request more information about something mentioned in the original message or made inappropriate requests for more information within the context of the task. The use of vocabulary was also basic with recycled words and expressions from the prompt itself. There was some control of grammar and syntax.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher-scoring student responses made appropriate requests for more information about something mentioned in the original message. <i>“¿Considerarían invitar a personas importantes en la comunidad latina?”; “¿Piensan enfocarse en solo las contribuciones de un país hispano?”</i></li> <li>These responses also included varied and appropriate vocabulary and accuracy of grammar and syntax.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some mid-low range student responses misunderstood the verb <i>“animar”</i> in the context of the question.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher scoring students understood the use of <i>“animar”</i> in the context of the question, that is to encourage their communities to attend and participate in the events and not to entertain.</li> </ul>

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

- Teachers should train their students to read the instructions carefully, including the introduction, in order to understand the specific topic and context for the task and to determine what they ultimately have to do: i.e., write an appropriate response to the email by including a formal register, answering the questions in the email, making a request for information, and including a formal greeting and closing.
- Teachers should suggest that students check off each element of the task listed in the directions as they complete the task to ensure that they have addressed all the task's requirements in relation to the topic and in the style of a formal email reply.
- Teachers should help students to infer implied meaning through context to prevent misinterpretations of less familiar words.
- Teachers should encourage students to provide elaboration in the body of the email. This could be done early in the year by having the whole class engage in the development of an email reply where the teacher keeps requesting more details and more elaboration without providing a set template for the students to follow. In this way, students will come to understand the expectations for this task. Teachers could ask students to work in small groups to read through the prompt and brainstorm different types of responses to the questions and requests for information. These ideas could then be shared with the entire class and each group could be tasked with submitting the first email as a group.
- Teachers should share with students the expectations for the task early on, as well as the scoring guidelines that will be used to evaluate their responses. Students should have the chance to view student samples provided on AP Central and discuss the score and the scoring guidelines. In this way students will have a better understanding of the task and how it will be scored in the future.
- Teachers should encourage students to build in time to proofread their email replies in order to correct grammatical errors and to check spelling, accents, and punctuation. When practicing email replies in class, students could engage in peer editing.
- Teachers should discuss formal register in class and provide many opportunities for students to use it in spoken and written interpersonal communication. Students need to be reminded that the formal register goes beyond using *tú* or *usted*. Students should be provided with samples of authentic emails in order to illustrate greetings and closings, formal expressions, and polite formulas to request information before attempting to have them write their first AP email reply.
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach AP French, AP German, and AP Italian Language and Culture to discuss common challenges for this task across languages and then brainstorm strategies to improve student learning and performance.
- Teachers should assign Email Reply prompts with the same conditions and time constraints as the exam and then score them using the official scoring guidelines. Feedback to students should focus on what students should do to move their performance to the next level.

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

- The AP Spanish Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students' skills in writing successful email replies. The Email Reply task model is presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-spanish-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.

- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP Spanish Language and Culture within AP Classroom. As noted above, the Email Reply task model is presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5 (including multiple AP Daily Videos that focus on developing strategies for and practicing email replies) and again in the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 1. AP Classroom may be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-spanish-language-and-culture>.
- Through AP Classroom, teachers can also access three Practice Exams in the AP Question Bank, which provide practice in the Email Reply and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should download the scoring guidelines for the Email Reply task available on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>.
- Teachers should view the AP World Language and Culture Online Module on interpersonal writing, Interpersonal Communication: Developing Writing Abilities, by Nyan-Ping Bi, in order to learn some strategies that focus on developing students' interpersonal writing skills. Teachers can access this online module here: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/developing-interpersonal-writing-abilities/index.html>.
- Teachers should choose a sample Email Reply prompt from the posted free-response questions from 2014–2024 on the Exam Page on AP Central and access the corresponding sample responses of high, mid, and low performances to share with students so they can examine student work vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. This will inform them further of expectations for performance on this task, as well as the evaluative criteria for each score point: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam/past-exam-questions>.

## Question 2

**Task:** Argumentative Essay

**Topic:** Should a university education be free for everyone?

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.17

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.11

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

This task assessed the presentational mode of writing by eliciting responses in the form of an argumentative essay on a given topic while referencing the three sources of information provided as part of the question. Students were first allotted 6 minutes to read the essay topic, i.e., the question they needed to address, and two printed sources. Then they listened to the audio source twice. Afterward, they had 40 minutes to write their essay. Students needed to be able to read and comprehend the two printed sources (an article and a chart) and listen to and comprehend the audio source. They were instructed to integrate viewpoints and information they found in all three sources to support their argument in response to the question. As students referred to the sources, they were supposed to identify them appropriately and organize their essays into clear paragraphs. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The curricular theme for the argumentative essay was “Families and Communities” and it asked students whether “A university education should be free for everyone.”

The first source, the article, “*La Universidad es para ti, la factura para todos*,” discussed how the increase in tuition fees can threaten the education of low-income students. It also highlighted how this increase could improve access to funds or scholarships for those who truly need financial support. The source also mentions that if there was a cost increase, some students would make more of an effort to succeed and finish their careers. The article goes on to say that in Spain 30% of the students abandon their studies after two years without completing their degree. Thus, this article includes several facets that can be used to either defend a free tuition policy or argue against it.

The second source, the chart, “*Créditos para educación: 616 mil estudiantes deben US\$4.500 millones y 27% está atrasado en sus pagos*”, identifies the number of people who are in debt to the banks in Chile, as well as the amount of debt with the banking sector.

The third source, the audio, “*La educación superior en Colombia*”, is a presentation that highlights that every person has the fundamental right to an education. The source mentions that in Colombia funds are being used to support the military and those persons who are incarcerated as opposed to investing in the educational sector. The source also suggests what the government should do to build a more solidary and democratic society. Lastly, the source supports the idea that a strong commitment to public education fosters a better economy and societies that are more equal and democratic in nature.

### ***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?***

Overall, students successfully completed the task by responding to the prompt and clearly articulating a defensible position on the topic using information from the provided sources. Their familiarity with the subject matter, particularly their interest in attending college, the current situation with student loan debt in

the US, and financial issues worldwide, enabled them to effectively express their opinions, defend their arguments, and provide relevant examples.

Source 1 provided extensive details supporting both free university education and paying for college studies, for example; *“Para distintos sectores, la respuesta es que los universitarios al menos algunos, tienen que aportar más dinero a su universidad.”* The article included quotations from experts in various fields such as economy, sociology, and education, who presented arguments for and against free tuition, as well as its potential consequences. Source 2 was also accessible due to its concise length and the inclusion of two graphs that highlighted the significant debt burden on individuals and the banking sector’s support for free university education, for example, *“616 mil estudiantes deben US\$4.500 millones y 27% está atrasado en sus pagos.”* The audio source was effectively utilized to advocate for free tuition, with students accurately focusing on the fundamental right to education and the societal benefits of a more educated population, for example, *“La educación de excelencia solo es posible si el estado asume seriamente su financiación.”* The most successful responses integrated all three sources into their essay, using information from each to substantiate their position.

Because most of the information presented in the sources leaned towards supporting free education, the majority of responses favored this option.

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

Most gaps in knowledge observed in student responses were related to their comprehension of factual information and/or viewpoints referenced in the sources. For example, students incorrectly used figures shown in the graphs, and others used incorrect percentages or figures presented in the audio. However, the most common gap in knowledge came from Source 1, where students misinterpreted the information presented in the article.

Another knowledge gap observed in lower-scoring responses was the failure to integrate the three sources into the essay effectively. Some responses resorted to merely citing or copying text from the articles. Other responses failed to use the sources to defend their position adequately. Other gaps in knowledge related to writing an argumentative essay appear to be related to language use and control, such as lack of proper vocabulary, inaccurate grammar, and syntax, as well as issues with organization, including proper paraphrasing and the use of transitional elements.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses in the low range demonstrated a lack of comprehension of the article, the graph and/or the audio source.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High-scoring responses were cohesive, supported a clear point of view, and effectively integrated information from the three sources in support of their argument.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some less successful responses attributed college dropout rates to expensive tuition, but the intent of the source is to link cost with potential effort; <i>“En España 30% de los alumnos abandonan solo en dos años sin título. Piensa eso es por como tan</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful students demonstrated a high degree of comprehension of Source 2 by using the proper figures to explain student debt and the percentage of late payments; <i>“616 mil estudiantes</i></li> </ul>

<p><i>caro es los estudios.</i>” Another common error was citing the information from the left column of the graph, instead of reading the sentence explaining the data, for example, “<i>Número de personas 620.000; 465.000, 310.000... .</i>”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses in the low range misinterpreted the figures presented in the audio or the amount of funds the government was allocating for military practices, prison inmates, and education. For example, using different figures to cite or refer to this information “<i>3.7% del productor interno bruto. En educacion 0.69%. En 1993 por cada estudiante el gobierno nacional aportaba 5 millones 700 mil pesos.</i>”</li> </ul>	<p><i>debe US \$5.400 millones y 27% está atrasado en sus pagos.</i>”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High scoring responses cited specific details from Source 3; for example, “<i>...las deudas estudiantiles y bancarias con el tiempo han ido incrementando.</i>” In addition, several responses mentioned the Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26). Lastly, some responses included specific years, figures, and percentages to explain the allocation of governmental funds and how education promotes equal and democratic societies.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some lower-scoring students presented their viewpoints but used only one source (particularly the audio) or none of the sources. For example, the most predominant information used was from source 3, “<i>Toda persona tiene derecho a a la educación</i>” and “<i>Es un derecho fundamental.</i>”</li> <li>Some responses in the low range merely quoted information from the sources without properly discussing them or using them to support the student’s argument.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High scoring responses developed a well elaborated argument and demonstrated a high degree of comprehension of the three sources regarding the pros and cons of a free college education, as well as the individual and collective benefits of education in general. For example, “<i>La educacion construye paises y comunidades solidarias. Con la educacion las personas se desarrollan más y hacen crecer al mundo... la educación es un derecho al que todos tienen que tener acceso</i>”. “<i>...No es considerable hacerla gratuita para todo, pero si con precios mas accesibles... .</i>”</li> </ul>

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

- Teachers should help students clearly understand the task of writing and developing an argumentative essay in Spanish. This includes teaching them how to explicitly answer the question asked in the prompt and how to cite sources appropriately.
- Teachers should practice rereading the prompt with the students, highlighting the keywords or phrases that will lead to writing an effective argumentative essay based on the options given in the prompt.
- Teachers should assist students in navigating the sources, especially when they do not fully understand the entire question or part of it. By guiding students to identify key elements in the sources, teachers can help them clarify their doubts, choose a point of view, and defend it effectively.
- Teachers could ask students to work in groups, take a position, and identify relevant and supporting details from each source in support of their argument. Teachers should help students find keywords and ideas from each of the sources and then look for the connections between them to effectively integrate the sources.
- Teachers could ask students to write their first argumentative essay as a group.



- Teachers should underscore the importance of a strong introductory paragraph. The inclusion of a hook sentence and a thesis statement are important elements that help the students develop the rest of the essay.
- Teachers should practice with students using transitional devices to help them improve the essay's development.
- Teachers should emphasize to students the importance of presenting their own viewpoint, based on the options given in the prompt, at the start of an argumentative essay.
- Teachers should show students the difference between integrating information from the sources to support their own viewpoints and merely summarizing the sources.
- Teachers should focus on addressing lexical and grammatical issues applicable to writing about any topic. Incorporating a variety of transitional elements would enhance organization and create a higher-quality essay.
- Teachers should develop students' skills and confidence by gradually scaffolding the process of writing an argumentative essay. Begin with the introductory paragraph, continue with the body of the essay based on the thesis statement, and finalize with a short conclusion.
- Teachers might begin this task early in the year by having students respond to a prompt with a strong thesis statement. Then, they can move on to building a thesis supported by two sources, and gradually guide students towards writing an essay that integrates three sources.
- Teachers should provide numerous opportunities for their students to engage in argumentative writing using sources, including authentic readings, graphics, and audios with different points of view.
- Teachers should assign other Argumentative Essay prompts under the same time constraints and conditions of the exam, then score them using the official scoring guidelines. Feedback to students should focus on what they can do to elevate their performance to the next higher level.
- Teachers can ask students to think of a possible topic or question for an essay after covering each unit. Then, students should work in groups to find three sources (an article, a graph, and an audio) that could be useful in answering the question.

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

- The AP Spanish Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students' skills in writing successful argumentative essays. The Argumentative Essay task model is presented and practiced in Units 2, 4, and 6. This task is scaffolded to build students' skills and confidence. The first time it appears in Unit 2, students write an argumentative essay responding to a prompt using only two sources, and subsequently Units 4 and 6, they write essays using three sources. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-spanish-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP Spanish Language and Culture within AP Classroom. As noted above, the Argumentative Essay task model is presented and practiced in Units 2, 4, and 6 (including multiple AP Daily Videos that focus on introducing, developing strategies for, and practicing argumentative essays) and again in the 2021 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 8 and the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 4. AP Classroom may be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-spanish-language-and-culture>.

- Through AP Classroom teachers can access the AP Question Bank. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access argumentative essay tasks from previous exams. Teachers can also access three practice exams aligned to the 2024 Exam in the AP Question Bank, which provide additional practice with the essay task and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should view the AP World Language and Culture online module on presentational writing, Presentational Communication: A Focus on Writing, by Dr. Federica Santini in order to learn about strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing presentational writing skills. Teachers can access this online module here: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-writing/index.html>.
- Teachers should download the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance as well as the evaluative criteria for each score point: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>.
- Teachers should choose a sample essay prompt and its sources from the posted free-response questions from 2014–2024 from AP Central and access the corresponding student sample responses of high, mid, and low performances to share with students so that they can examine student work vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. This will further inform them of expectations for performance on this task. Sample responses can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam/past-exam-questions>.

### Question 3

**Task:** Conversation

**Topic:** Discussing Ideas for a School Project about Travel in a Spanish-Speaking Country

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 4.24

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.60

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

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

The curricular theme for this task was "Contemporary Life." The students were asked to engage in a conversation with Izel, a classmate, to collaborate on a project for their Spanish class. There were five audio prompts:

1. In the first prompt, Izel greets the student and asks what Spanish-speaking country they should choose for their project and why. The outline directs students to respond with details.
2. In the second prompt, Izel affirms the suggestions and asks if they should stay in a hotel or with a family. The outline directs students to respond and explain why.
3. In the third prompt, Izel explains they must create an itinerary to explore the country. She asks about activities they could include. The outline indicates that the student should respond with details.
4. In the fourth prompt, Izel praises the ideas in the previous reply and expresses concern indicating that the project is due tomorrow. She asks what they can do to finish their project on time. The outline directs students to respond with a plan.
5. In the fifth prompt, Izel expresses approval of the ideas in the prior turn and then asks how they can make their presentation more interesting for the class. The outline directs students to respond with details.

***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?***

Most students found the questions accessible and their responses provided a variety of answers that incorporated course themes by offering information related to a project about travel in the Spanish-speaking world. Most students suggested Spanish-speaking countries and relevant reasons for their selection. Their responses demonstrated a variety of language functions to provide reasons and explanations for their choices, identify details, and make suggestions. The responses featured a wide range of levels of

appropriateness in terms of relevant content, amount of information, elaboration, linguistic accuracy, and suitable use of informal register that was often implicit.

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

One of the most common issues in several responses was the result of not being fully aware of the context of the conversation. Some students did not fully understand that they were collaborating with Izel on a project about travel to a Spanish-speaking country. Hence, some responses were not clearly appropriate within the context of the task. Another common difficulty in some responses was caused by gaps in listening comprehension of spoken Spanish, leading to inappropriate responses, the use of English words, or the lack of a spoken response.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in the lower score range were often inappropriate, as students were unable to comprehend the spoken prompts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in the high range showed a clear understanding of all or most of the questions, as evidenced by responses that were appropriate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responses showed a lack of familiarity with the format of the task, reflecting a lack of understanding of the context for the conversation provided in the conversation outline and the invitation to respond with details when asked multiple-part questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in the high range reflected students' ability to understand and take on the assigned role and interact appropriately while following the conversation outline.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the first prompt, some students did not select a Spanish-speaking country for the project and suggested other countries, "Brasil." Others suggested cities like "Cancún" or "Acapulco."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses selected a Spanish-speaking country and explained in detail why they made that choice.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responses misinterpreted the intent of the second prompt. The prompt presented the option to stay in a hotel or with a family. Some students did not understand that it was referring to a host family and they interpreted it as staying with their own family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong responses indicated the advantages of staying in a hotel (personal security, independence) or with a host family (more authentic experience, better opportunity to improve their Spanish).</li> <li>• Responses also connected the response to the first prompt because they stated that the reason why they were suggesting a particular country was because they had family there.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responses provided a list of activities for the itinerary that only demonstrated basic cultural competence and vocabulary such as "ir a las playas," "comer en restaurantes," "ir al museo," etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful responses suggested culturally specific activities for the itinerary, "visitar las hermosas playas de Nayarit," "ir al museo Prado," "comer tapas," "ver un espectáculo de tango." Students suggested activities that demonstrated</li> </ul>

	a more developed vocabulary such as “senderismo,” “ecoturismo,” etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses did not understand the urgency of completing the project by tomorrow and offered a plan to complete the project in the future “podemos vernos en mi casa este fin de semana,” “trabajamos mañana después de escuela.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses provided a plan that prioritized urgency, “trabajamos ahora,” “podemos reunirnos esta tarde en mi casa,” “colaboramos durante el almuerzo,” “dividimos el trabajo,” “pedimos una extensión a la maestra,” etc.</li> </ul>

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

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

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

- The AP Spanish Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students’ skills and confidence for engaging in the Conversation task model. This task model is specifically presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-spanish-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.

- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP Spanish Language and Culture within AP Classroom. As noted above, the Conversation task model is presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5 (including multiple AP Daily Videos that focus on developing strategies for and practicing student conversations) and again in the 2021 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 1 and in the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 7. AP Classroom may be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-spanish-language-and-culture>.
- Through AP Classroom teachers can access the AP Question Bank. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access conversation tasks from previous exams. Teachers can also access three practice exams aligned to the 2024 Exam in the AP Question Bank, which provide additional practice for the Conversation task and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Language and Culture Online Module on interpersonal speaking, Interpersonal Communication: Enhancing Student’s Interpersonal Speaking Abilities, by Clarissa Adams-Fletcher, to learn about strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing interpersonal speaking skills. Teachers can access this online module here: [https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/interpersonal-communications/story\\_html5.html](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/interpersonal-communications/story_html5.html).
- Teachers should download a copy of the scoring guidelines for the Conversation task available on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance. They should select conversations from those available from 2014–2024 along with the provided sample responses. They should have students listen to the sample responses and use the scoring guidelines to understand how performance is assessed on the exam: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam/past-exam-questions>.
- Teachers should teach students how to use the conversation outline to their advantage. As you look at examples from previous years, point out commonalities from year to year so students can anticipate possible types of responses.

## Question 4

**Task:** Cultural Comparison

**Topic:** The Role of Popular Celebrations

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 2.96

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.04

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

The cultural comparison task assessed presentational speaking by having the student develop and deliver a spoken presentation comparing an aspect of the target culture with that of another community. Students were given 4 minutes to read the topic and plan the presentation, and then 2 minutes to deliver the presentation. The response received a single, holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme for the cultural comparison task in 2024 was “Families and Communities” and the prompt asked students to compare the role of popular celebrations of the target community to those in their own community or another community.

Students were expected to compare the cultural features (products, practices, and perspectives) of a Spanish speaking community to their own community or any other community. This development was assessed by analyzing the students’ treatment of the task, how well they demonstrated an understanding of the target culture, their use of transitional expressions to organize their presentation, and how their language use aided or impeded the presentation's overall comprehensibility.

### ***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?***

Effective comparisons of the role of popular celebrations within a Hispanic community and within another community were as diverse as the Spanish-speaking world, naturally including Latino and Hispanic communities in the United States. Comparison responses featured a wide variety of approaches, including highlighting how celebrations serve as a means to teach culture, to commemorate specific dates and famous individuals, to provide opportunities for fun and relaxation, and to influence or preserve values, beliefs, and traditions within a community. Examples of responses that successfully communicated the role of popular traditions included how the Day of the Dead celebrates life, how both Thanksgiving and *La Purísima* from Nicaragua demonstrate thankfulness, how popular celebrations impact the economy, and how certain celebrations acknowledge and honor religious identity.

Successful comparisons focused on specific celebrations (products and practices) and their role (perspective) within two distinct communities that were pertinent terms of comparison within the context of the task. Effective comparisons used appropriate cohesive devices and a variety of grammar and vocabulary to enhance the spoken presentation directed to their peers, with appropriate use of formal register that was often implicit.

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

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	Responses that Demonstrate Understanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some weaker responses limited their comparison to the names and activities associated with celebrations without discussing their role. <i>“En España hay fiestas de carnaval uh con desfiles y mucho calor y es un todo de un semana usualmente, pero en mi comunidad Estados Unidos no tiene mucho uh, celebraciones por un semana completa.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most successful responses effectively and explicitly communicated the role(s) of popular celebrations in two communities with at least one of them being from the Spanish-speaking world. <i>“En la Fiesta de las Cometas hay muchas actividades para todos diferentes y también hacen un punto de celebrar la cultura y las cosas que son más especiales en Colombia como la comida y la música y actividades tradicionales... Similarmente, para el día de Acción de Gracias, la comida es algo que es muy importante, pero es más enfocando en dando gracias para todo que tienes... en tu vida.”</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses that only contained statements with no development impeded the ability to compare. <i>“Tiene muchos en mi comunidada tiene mucha fiesta. Tiene... Tiene mucha celebracion de, de la dia de la madre... en comunidades mucho, mucho hispanico y todo lo, todos hablan espanol.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong presentations clearly compared the target culture with the student’s own or another community and included supporting details and relevant examples: <i>“y también muchos de las fiestas son cristianos por ejemplo Navidad... personas en Buenos Aires y en Boston... va a la iglesia... y es una celebración de su identidad religiosa y su identidad religiosa es similar y por eso...”</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By presenting only one culture, some presentations didn’t complete the task.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses demonstrated an understanding of the target culture celebrations in two communities and compared the products, practices, and perspectives (<i>papel</i>) of those celebrations.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some cultural comparisons misinterpreted the word <i>papel</i> in the prompt for paper and compared things made of paper perhaps connected to celebrations <i>“piñatas”</i>, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful responses not only understood the word <i>papel</i> but also developed presentations that clearly compared the role of celebrations in both communities.</li> </ul>

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

- Teachers should make sure their students read the task and instructions carefully and address all of the expected parts for appropriate completion of the task.
- Teachers should remind their students about the difference between the task prompt and the AP curricular theme so that students do not skip the prompt and just give a presentation based on the curricular theme.



- Teachers should be vertical teaming an ever-growing list of transitions to help students become proficient at using a variety of transitional expressions and cohesive devices to create paragraph-length discourse in spoken presentations, especially those used for comparing, contrasting, and connecting ideas.
- Teachers should train their students to always include two communities in their cultural comparison, ensuring that at least one of them is a Spanish-speaking community of any size, as stated in the scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should remind students that it is perfectly acceptable to compare a Spanish-speaking community to their own community or any other community, including another Spanish-speaking community.
- Teachers should present students with sample questions containing two parts or multiple parts, and model how to break them down into its various constitutive parts: *¿Qué papel tienen las celebraciones populares (por ejemplo, las fiestas patrias, los carnavales, los desfiles, etc.) en una comunidad del mundo hispanohablante que te sea familiar? Compara el papel que tienen en una región del mundo hispanohablante que te sea familiar con el papel que tienen en tu comunidad o en otra comunidad.* Teachers should also present students with lexical variations of the term “role” in Spanish, such as “rol” or “papel,” so that they are not confused by different formulations of the question.
- Teachers should remind students that the list of ideas provided in the parenthesis are suggestions and should encourage them to generate other possibilities to develop as supporting details.
- Teachers should model and practice the difference between implicit and explicit comparisons so that students can compare both communities clearly and in detail, leaving no room for ambiguity, confusion, or doubt.
- Teachers should work with the Vertical Team to ensure that students compare cultural products, practices, and perspectives from the novice level.
- Teachers should expose students to a wide variety of authentic written, audio, audiovisual, and visual texts and encourage students to make observations and inferences about different Spanish-speaking cultural communities.
- Teachers should provide effective strategies for making cultural comparisons. They should encourage the use of Venn diagrams or T-charts so students can organize their thoughts when preparing the cultural comparison.
- Teachers should train their students in the speaking tasks using the same technology and location where they will take the exam early in the year so that students can become acquainted with the system.
- Teachers should verify that the quality of recordings allows for accurate scoring and that the correct recording has been saved. If there is a problem with the audio quality, teachers should work with the AP Coordinator to provide an appropriate testing environment for the speaking portion of the exam.

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

- The AP Spanish Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students’ skills in the Cultural Comparison task model. This task model is specifically presented and practiced in all six units and is scaffolded to build students’ skills and confidence over time. For example, in Unit 1, students give a 1-minute cultural presentation about an aspect of culture learned in that unit; in Unit 2, they do a 1-minute cultural comparison; in Unit 3, a full 2-minute cultural comparison and subsequent full comparisons on topics of increasing difficulty in units 4, 5, and 6. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-spanish-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.

- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP Spanish Language and Culture within AP Classroom. As noted above, the Cultural Comparison task model is presented and practiced in all six units (including multiple AP Daily Videos that focus on developing strategies for and practicing student conversations) and again in the 2021 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 2 and in the 2022 AP Exam On-Demand Review Video Session 5. AP Classroom may be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/classroom-resources?course=ap-spanish-language-and-culture>.
- Through AP Classroom teachers can access the AP Question Bank. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access Cultural Comparison tasks from previous exams. Teachers can also access three practice exams aligned to the 2024 Exam in the AP Question Bank, which provide additional practice for the cultural comparison and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam>.
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Language and Culture Online Module on presentational speaking, *Presentational Communication: A Focus on Speaking*, by Angelika Becker to learn about strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing presentational speaking skills. Teachers can access this online module here: [https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-speaking/story\\_html5.html](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-speaking/story_html5.html).
- Teachers can select sample responses to cultural comparisons posted on AP Central from 2014–2024 and have students listen to them and apply the scoring guidelines to help them understand expectations for how this task is evaluated: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-language-and-culture/exam/past-exam-questions>.