

Week of May 11 - 15

AP English Language and Composition

*There are 7 steps, some of them timed, some of them not.
Take each step as it comes and do not skip ahead!*

Step 1: Review the AP Language 3x3 Online Annotations Support

Step 2: Read and Annotate (using the 3x3 Online Support) the excerpt from the speech by Condoleezza Rice, which is below. (Use on the excerpt for the remaining steps, however I included the link to the speech in case you would like to read the whole prose.) (8 minutes)

2020 Exam Sample Question 1

(Source: AP English Language Course and Exam Description)

Allotted time: 45 minutes (plus 5 minutes to submit)

In May 2012 former United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who was the first African American woman to hold that position, gave a commencement speech to the graduating class of Southern Methodist University, a private university in Dallas, Texas.

The full speech, and a transcript are available on the Southern Methodist University website (<https://www.smu.edu/News/2012/commencementCondoleezza-Rice-speech>). The relevant passage for analysis begins with the sentence “What do I mean by human progress?” and ends with the sentence “You see, things that seem impossible often seem inevitable in retrospect.”

Now what do I mean by human progress? I believe that all human beings share certain fundamental aspirations. They want protections for their lives and their liberties. They want to think freely and to worship as they wish. They want opportunities to educate their children, both boys and girls. And they want the dignity that comes with having to be asked for their consent to be governed.

All too often, difference has been used to divide and dehumanize. I grew up in Birmingham, Alabama – a place quite properly called the most segregated city

in America – and I know how it feels to hold aspirations when half your neighbors think that you're incapable of or uninterested in anything higher. And I know there are some in this audience who have perhaps faced the same.

And in my professional life, I have listened in disbelief as it has been said of men and women in Asia and Africa and Latin America and Eastern Europe and Russia, from time to time, that they did not share the basic aspirations of all human beings. Somehow these people were just "different." That meant "unworthy of what we enjoy." "Maybe they're just not ready for democracy," it would be said. But of course this was once said even about black people. We were just too childlike. We didn't care about rights or citizenship or the vote. We didn't care about freedom and liberty.

Well, today in the Middle East, the last bastion of that argument, people are putting a nail in the coffin of that idea. They are not just seeking their freedom, they are seizing it. But freedom and democracy are not the same thing. Freedom and rights have to be institutionalized into rule of law, into constitutions. And if you don't think constitutions matter, just remember this: When Martin Luther King Jr. wanted to say that segregation was wrong, in my hometown of Birmingham, he didn't have to say that the United States had to be something else – only that the United States had to be what it said it was. That is why the creed matters.

But stable democracy requires more than just the institutionalization of freedom. It requires that there can be no tyranny of the majority. And most importantly, it requires that the strong cannot exploit the weak. Indeed, democracy is only as strong as its weakest link. And indeed, if every life is equal before the law, and within the eyes of God, then every life is worthy. Every life is capable of greatness. And it truly doesn't matter where you came from, it matters where you are going.

At SMU, you have been taught the importance of service. You have been taught to serve those who are less fortunate. And yes, it will help them, but it will help you more. Because when you encounter those who are less fortunate, you cannot possibly give way to aggrievement – "Why do I not have?" – or its twin

brother, entitlement – “Why don’t they give me?” In fact, you will ask instead, not “Why do I not have?” but “Why have I been given so much?” And from that spirit, you will join the legions of impatient patriots and optimists who are working toward a better human future. And yes, sometimes it seems very hard indeed. But always remember in those times of trial, that what seems impossible seems inevitable in retrospect.

Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Rice makes to convey her message to her audience.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Step 3: Carefully craft a defensible thesis which addresses the prompt; do so without listing any rhetorical strategies or devices. (4 minutes)

Step 4: Write the Rhetorical Analysis Essay (30 minutes).

**~WALK AWAY FROM THE ASSIGNMENT
AND TAKE A 20 MINUTE BREAK AT
MINIMUM BEFORE BEGINNING THE NEXT
THREE STEPS!~**

**(THIS WILL HAVE TO SERVE AS THE DEFACTO
TRADING OF PAPERS... IF THIS WERE A TYPICAL YEAR
YOU WOULD HAVE GONE THROUGH THE PROCESS IN
CLASS AND REFLECTED UPON A PEER’S ESSAY...**

HOWEVER THESE ARE EXTRAORDINARY TIMES AND THUS WE MUST ADAPT)

Step 5: Go through your essay and review it, be sure to read it as it is and now how you assume you wrote it. Ask yourself these questions and reflect upon them in writing. Each question should have one to two sentences (at minimum in response):

- 1- Does your thesis respond to the prompt?**
- 2- Is your thesis defensible? Why or why not? If not, edit your thesis now to make it defensible.**
- 3- Do you examine the entire excerpt, taking into consideration why College Board would have the prose begin and end when it does?**
- 4- Do you tackle the analysis in a chronological pattern or were you skipping around?**
- 5- Do you account for shifts in the prose?**
- 6- How have you balanced your evidence? (Direct quotation, summary and paraphrase all present and accounted for throughout the bodies in an even way...)**
- 7- Was your time management in the writing of the essay feasible for the actual exam day? (i.e. Were you able to craft a conclusion? Are your body paragraphs equally as powerful or did you put all of your effort into the first body paragraph and have little time and few ideas for the second and/or third paragraphs?**
- 8- In the structure of your essay did you choose to use 2 body paragraphs or 3 body paragraphs? Why did you make the choice you did? Now in hindsight would you go back and choose differently? Defend your decision?**
- 9- What thought and focus did you put into your own diction (word choice) and syntax (sentence structure) in the development of your essay? Did you craft an essay that is engaging for your reader? Did you keep your reader in mind at all (knowing that they will be reading thousands of essays on the same topic the week the exam is graded...)?**
- 10- Did you achieve the sophistication point? Why or why not?**
- 11- What should you replicate on exam day and what do you need to be mindful of in order to achieve a better outcome?**

Step 6: Examine the Rubric (a copy can be found on the Facebook Support Group and on the AP English Language and Composition Webpage). With as much neutrality as possible give yourself a score. Reflect in writing why you earned the score you did for each row of the rubric... do not add the rows together. Your

score would look something like 1/2/1 or 0/1/0 (hopefully not) or 1/3/1, you get the idea...

Step 7: Upload to turnitin.com (pretending you are uploading to College Board like you will for the exam, which will take place on 5/20/20 at 11am PST. (5 minutes) be sure to include your reflection at the bottom of your document!

For your own good do the following...

Step 8: Practice logging into the College Board website. Set a reminder on your phone and an alarm for the day of the exam, be sure to log in 30 minutes early. (Again, the exam begins at 11am PST on May 20).

Step 9: Reach out to a classmate in AP English Language and Composition (they can be from a different class period) and reassure each other, you are ready, you can do this! Go over what you need to do, sometimes students absorb information better from their peers than they do the teacher... Report on the Facebook group who you connected with and how you supported each other.

Step 10: Take a breath, stressing over the exam will not make things better for you... Have confidence in yourself. Make sure you have your supports ready, have a quiet place set aside, negotiate with your family for as much bandwidth during the testing time. Communicate with them not to disturb you from 10:30 until 11:50 on May 20.

Believe in yourself, I believe in you!