AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

2014 SCORING GUIDELINES

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**Rhetorical Analysis Essay Rubric**

The essay score should reflect the essay’s quality as a whole. All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional lapses in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into a holistic evaluation of an essay’s overall quality. In no case should an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics score higher than a 2.

**Highly Effective**

9 – Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for the score of 8 and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, thorough in their development, or impressive in their control of language.

8 – **Effective**

Essays earning a score of 8 effectively analyze the rhetorical strategies King uses to defend the strategy of nonviolent resistance to racism. They develop their analysis\* with evidence and explanations that are appropriate and convincing, referring to the passage explicitly or implicitly. The prose demonstrates a consistent ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

7 – Essays earning a score of 7 meet the criteria for the score of 6 but provide more complete explanation, more thorough development, or a more mature prose style.

6 – **Adequate**

Essays earning a score of 6 adequately analyze the rhetorical strategies King uses to defend the strategy of nonviolent resistance to racism. They develop their analysis with evidence and explanations that are appropriate and sufficient, referring to the passage explicitly or implicitly. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

5 – Essays earning a score of 5 analyze the rhetorical strategies King uses to defend the strategy of nonviolent resistance to racism. The evidence or explanations used may be uneven, inconsistent, or limited. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the writer’s ideas.

4 – **Inadequate**

Essays earning a score of 4 inadequately analyze the rhetorical strategies King uses to defend the strategy of nonviolent resistance to racism. These essays may misunderstand the passage, misrepresent the strategies King uses, or may analyze these strategies insufficiently. The evidence or explanations used may be inappropriate, insufficient, or unconvincing. The prose generally conveys the writer’s ideas but may be inconsistent in controlling the elements of effective writing.

3 – Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for the score of 4 but demonstrate less success in analyzing the rhetorical strategies King uses to defend the strategy of nonviolent resistance to racism. They are less perceptive in their understanding of the passage or King’s strategies, or the explanations or examples may be particularly limited or simplistic. The essays may show less maturity in control of writing.

2 – **Little Success**

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate little success in analyzing the rhetorical strategies King uses to defend the strategy of nonviolent resistance to racism. These essays may misunderstand the prompt, misread the passage, fail to analyze the strategies King uses, or substitute a simpler task by responding to the prompt tangentially with unrelated, inaccurate, or inappropriate explanation. The prose often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing, such as grammatical problems, a lack of development or organization, or a lack of control.

1 – Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for the score of 2 but are undeveloped, especially simplistic in their explanation, or weak in their control of language.

0 – Indicates an off-topic response, one that merely repeats the prompt, an entirely crossed-out response, a drawing, or a response in a language other than English.

*— Indicates an entirely blank response.*

*\* For the purposes of scoring, analysis means explaining the rhetorical choices an author makes in an attempt to achieve a particular effect or purpose.*

General AP Language & Composition Free-Response Scoring Rubric

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| 9 | 98 - 100 | A+ |
| 9↓ | 96-97 | High A |
| 8↑ | 94-95 | A |
| 8 | 92-93 | High A- |
| 8↓ | 90-91 | A- |
| 7↑ | 89-90 | Low A- |
| 7 | 87-88 | High B+ |
| 7↓ | 86-87 | B+ |
| 6↑ | 85-86 | Low B+ |
| 6 | 83-85 | High B |
| 6↓ | 81-82 | B or B- |
| 5↑ | 79-80 | C+ / B- |
| 5 | 77-78 | C+ |
| 5↓ | 75-76 | C |
| 4↑ | 73-74 | Low C |
| 4 | 70-72 | C- |
| 3 | 67-69 | D+ |