

# AP English Language and Composition

## 2020 Scoring Guidelines

### Question 1: Synthesis Essay 6 points

As the Internet age changes what and how people read, there has been considerable debate about the future of public libraries. While some commentators question whether libraries can stay relevant, others see new possibilities for libraries in the changing dynamics of today's society.

Carefully read the six sources, found on the AP English Language and Composition Classroom Resources page, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the role, if any, that public libraries should serve in the future.

Source A (Kranich)  
Source B (calendar)  
Source C (Shank)  
Source D (charts)  
Source E (Siegler)  
Source F (ALA)

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Select and use evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support your line of reasoning. Indicate clearly the sources used through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. Sources may be cited as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the description in parentheses.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row A</b></p> <p><b>Thesis</b></p> <p><b>(0-1 points)</b></p> <p><b>4.B</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p> <p>For any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no defensible thesis.</li> <li>The intended thesis only restates the prompt.</li> <li>The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim.</li> <li>There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p>Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only restate the prompt.</li> <li>Do not take a position, or the position must be inferred or is vague.</li> <li>Equivocate or summarize other’s arguments but not the student’s (e.g., some people say it’s good, some people say it’s bad).</li> <li>State an obvious fact rather than making a claim that requires a defense.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to the prompt by developing a position on the role that public libraries should serve in the future, rather than restate or rephrase the prompt. Clearly takes a position rather than just stating there are pros/cons.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Restate the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Some people question whether libraries can stay relevant, others say there are new possibilities for them.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Addresses the topic of the prompt, but do not take a position</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Maybe libraries will become collaborative environments with more newer technologies; maybe they will disappear as people become more rely more on their phones.”</i></li> <li><i>“Libraries are the places that spark the educational fire in individuals, which is crazy to think there might be an end to them.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Address the topic of the prompt but is state an obvious fact as a claim</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Libraries been around for hundreds of years.”</i></li> </ul>		<p><b>Examples that earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Present a defensible position that responds to the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Libraries will only benefit and develop our society greatly in the long run.” [Minimally acceptable thesis]</i></li> <li><i>“Although some may believe that libraries are no longer necessary, they are essential to the success of the US democratic system.”</i></li> <li><i>“In the future, public libraries should be upkeep with love and embrace other cultures and languages in the regional community.”</i></li> <li><i>“Given that no person alive today has ever known a world without public libraries, discontinuity them would do a diservice to many, and hinder the education of all those that rely on them.”</i></li> <li><i>“Tradition is being pushed aside in a technology-based world. However due to the educational benefits and the comfort libraries provide when in need and the historical implications, it is essential to society to keep these public reading spaces alive.”</i></li> <li><i>“Libraries serve vital roles in society: they hold historical significance and teach people how to properly engage with civics, they help build and reinforce communities, and libraries provide resources for the less fortunate. All in all, libraries should be funded and should continue to serve these roles in the future.”</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity.</li> <li>The thesis may be anywhere within the response.</li> <li>For a thesis to be defensible, the sources must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn’t do so to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.</li> </ul>		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
<p><b>Row B</b></p> <p><b>Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points)</b></p> <p><b>2.A</b></p> <p><b>4.A</b></p> <p><b>6.A</b></p> <p><b>6.B</b></p> <p><b>6.C</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p> <p>Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or references fewer than two of the provided sources.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides evidence from or references at least two of the provided sources.</p> <p>AND</p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.</p>	<p><b>2 points</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides evidence from or references at least three of the provided sources.</p> <p>AND</p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.</p>	<p><b>3 points</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning.</p> <p>AND</p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p>	<p><b>4 points</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning.</p> <p>AND</p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>					
<p><b>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are incoherent or do not address the prompt.</li> <li>May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tend to focus on summary or description of sources rather than specific details.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities.</li> <li>May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument.</li> <li>May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim.</li> <li>Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument.</li> <li>Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims.</li> <li>Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument.</li> <li>Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.</li> </ul>					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p>Row C</p> <p>Sophistication (0-1 points)</p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p> <p>Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p>Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<p><b>2.A</b></p> <p><b>4.C</b></p> <p><b>6.B</b></p> <p><b>8.A</b></p> <p><b>8.B</b></p> <p><b>8.C</b></p>	<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”).</li> <li>Only hint at or suggest other arguments (“<i>While some may argue that...</i>” OR “<i>Some people say...</i>”).</li> <li>Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the argument.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crafting a nuanced argument by consistently identifying and exploring complexities or tensions across the sources.</li> <li>Articulating the implications or limitations of an argument (either the student’s argument or arguments conveyed in the sources) by situating it within a broader context.</li> <li>Making effective rhetorical choices that consistently strengthen the force and impact of the student’s argument.</li> <li>Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</li> </ul>		