

# AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

## 2014 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 2

The essay score should reflect the essay's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 40 minutes to read and write; the essay, therefore, is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the essay as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well.

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.

---

**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 Adams uses to advise her son. 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 Adams uses to advise her son. 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 Adams uses to advise her son. 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 Adams uses to advise her son. These essays may misunderstand the passage, misrepresent the strategies Adams 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 Adams uses to advise her son. They are less perceptive in their understanding of the passage or Adams's strategies, or the explanations or examples may be particularly limited or simplistic. The essays may show less maturity in control of writing.

**AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION**  
**2014 SCORING GUIDELINES**

**Question 2 (continued)**

**2 – Little Success**

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in analyzing the rhetorical strategies Adams uses to advise her son. These essays may misunderstand the prompt, misread the passage, fail to analyze the strategies Adams 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.

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

2

2A  
(1 of 4)

In 1780, eight years before the ratification of the constitution, Abigail Adams wrote to her son, <sup>John Quincy Adams</sup> the future president of the United States, while he ~~he~~ was travelling overseas with his father who was ~~travelling as~~ a US diplomat <sup>at the time</sup> before he was elected president. Unaware that her son ~~would~~ become president, she ~~offers~~ writes to convince her son of ~~the~~ travel and of diligence. Adams <sup>employs</sup> ~~uses~~ metaphors, flattery, ~~in a tone of~~ a concerned, maternal tone, historical allusions, <sup>qualified</sup> ~~backhanded~~ flattery, patriotic appeals, and lists to impart the importance of maximizing on natural talent by applying oneself.

Adams encourages her son to be diligent by appealing to his affection for her. <sup>and flattering him in the first half of the letter.</sup> She opens the letter with "my dear son" to ~~to~~ establish that she does not intend to scold him but to guide him. Her ~~first concern~~ she next establishes that her primary concern is his safety, appealing to his emotions so that he will be receptive to her advice. ~~she~~ ~~will~~



2

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

complimenting his language skills ~~in hopes that he will continue to improve~~ qualifying her compliment with by asserting his need to improve. Her reference to a discussion with an author <sup>in line</sup> legitimizes her argument, as a form of employing the "older and wiser" claim. Her reference to the author's metaphor <sup>in line</sup> intends to assure her son of the importance of the trip ~~and~~ on which she encouraged him to embark. She again flatters him <sup>in line</sup> by emphasizing his vast natural talent, but again qualifies the assertion by highlighting the necessity of employing his God-given gifts ~~and~~ by showing effort. She instills a sense of guilt in him for not capitalizing on ~~the~~ his blessings. ~~in hopes that he will become more diligent and mature.~~

Adams employs his historical allusions and invokes a sense of patriotism in her son in the second half of the essay letter in order to instill in her son a sense of



Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

2

2A  
(3 of 4)

responsibility. In line 27, she implies that he is a genius like Cicero, proceeding to allude to his writings about the "tyranny" of Catiline, Verres, and Marc Anthony. ~~The~~ <sup>(line 32)</sup> compliment flatters while the historical allusion provides examples to legitimize her point that "the habits of a vigorous mind are formed in contending with difficulties" (lines 32-34). The present difficulties to which she refers ~~are the~~ involve the American revolution from Great Britain and the birth of a new nation. Adams invokes a sense of patriotism to call her son to action and out of his current lethargic state by listing "war, tyranny, and desolation" (line 41) experienced by the country. She encourages her son to ~~go to~~ conduct his life aiding the country from the aforementioned ills which are the "scourges of the almighty" (line 42). By invoking God's name, she intensifies the need for her son to change himself so that he can change the shape of the future of the nation. Additionally, Adams implies



2

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

that, as his mother, she has invested her life in him, and by ~~dis~~ disregarding her advice, he will prove her life a waste and a failure. She manipulates by evoking guilt ~~once~~ again. She closes the letter with ~~a charge~~ strong maternal tone ~~that by becoming more diligent, he might~~. stating her hope that he will become more diligent not only for his country but also for his parents, motivating him through patriotism and maternal love.

~~The time in which this letter~~  
~~was~~ Abigail Adams wrote this letter in a very uncertain time in American history. ~~to~~ She ~~not only~~ was unaware not only that her husband and son would one day become president but also that the office of president would even exist. She wrote to her son in desperate hope, that by raising him well, she could ensure a bright future for her beloved homeland.

#

In 1780, whilst her son John Adams was traveling abroad with his father, Abigail Adams wrote a letter advising and convincing him to take hold of every opportunity <sup>was being</sup> he ~~was being~~ provided with. Since <sup>John</sup> Adams father, and ~~her~~ <sup>Abigail Adams</sup> husband, was a United States Diplomat, she wanted the younger Adams to appreciate the chances he had been given and use them to make himself a better man and thinker. She shares this advice through use of ~~pathos~~, classical ~~rhetorical~~ rhetorics such as ~~pathos~~, ~~logos~~, and ~~ethos~~ ethos, pathos, and logos, as well as figurative language such as metaphors and imagery.

It seems from the ~~letter that Adams~~ ~~Adams~~ diction in the letter that Adams forced her son to go on the voyage. She starts out by <sup>awarding</sup> ~~giving~~ herself the credibility to have done so. "If I had thought your reluctance arose from proper deliberation.... I should not have urged you to accompany your father and brother." As his mother, she thought she knew what was best for him. Furthermore, she consistently cites the <sup>credibility</sup> ~~authority~~ of the older John Adams as a teacher ~~to encourage~~ throughout the letter to encourage the younger John to listen. Adams writes "you have a parent... as to be honored with the important embassy which at present calls him abroad," clearly using <sup>prove ethos</sup> circumlocution to ~~show John to listen~~ without stating it directly. his dad is a diplomat directly.

Additionally, the use of pathos and logos in the letter



Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

2

2B  
(2 of 3)

is apparent. <sup>tonal shift from serious to sensitive</sup> The ~~change~~ ~~sensitive tone that underlies the~~ ~~at the end of the poem~~ ~~whole passage~~ is a way for Abigail Adams to show her son that while she is being <sup>formal</sup> ~~serious~~, she still cares. The sense of emotion that comes with phrases such as "render your parents supremely happy, particularly your ever affectionate mother," ~~helps Adams case~~ is an emotional appeal that helps Adams case.\* The logos can be seen through the historical example of Crervo. The facts gives ~~the~~ the argument a historical context. She <sup>then</sup> expands the example by saying that "all history will convince you of this, and that wisdom and penetration are the fruit of experience."

\* She incites additional emotions in him with <sup>philosophical sayings such as</sup> ~~careful diction~~.  
"These are times in which a genius would wish to live." ~~Adams~~ Adams wants to get him excited, <sup>and</sup> ~~but~~ the tone is also slightly condescending to do so.

The use of <sup>figurative language</sup> ~~imagery~~ throughout the piece is also apparent. ~~She~~ Adams first uses a metaphor of ~~a river~~ <sup>this</sup> that involves a river ~~that~~ not only complements the letter nicely because he is on a voyage, but ~~that~~ ~~brings to mind~~ it is a strong way of demonstrating potential. Rivers are thought of as strong and rich, rather than weak or feeble. Only one paragraph later, however, Adams transitions to ~~weak~~ descriptions of "war, tyranny, and desolation." Given, there doesn't seem to be much description, but the words are so powerful that they are enough to evoke unpleasant





2

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

2B  
(3 of 3)

images that make John want to listen. She then gives John the responsibility of changing the images. "It is your lot, my son, to be an eyewitness of these calamities in your own name land."

There was no one rhetorical strategy that totally encapsulated the letter of Abigail Adams. Rather, by subtly using a combination of many, her message was powerfully sent. Of these, ethos, pathos, logos, ~~art~~ and ~~fr~~; metaphors, and imagery were the most significant in portraying the idea <sup>that</sup> her son needed to take advantage of the voyage for himself and his country.

#

Question 2

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

2C  
(1 of 2)

In Abigail Adams' letter to her son John Quincy Adams, she uses many rhetorical devices to advise her son. A few of these include pathos, repetition, and diction.

~~requires~~ Throughout the whole letter you can tell that she's using ~~a~~ her soft, mother tone, towards her son. In doing this she's using pathos (emotion) to get her advice to her son, as he should be use to this while he was growing up. In lines 61-63, Abigail Adams says "do honor your country... your ever affectionate mother." I feel as though she writes this to make her son feel some type of guilt and making it to where he thinks that he has to do something.

In lines 21 and 43, Abigail Adams uses the words "my son". I believe she does this so ~~he~~ she can remind him that the person who wrote this is his mother and he was most likely raised to obey his mother. If this ~~was~~ had not been repeated, the entire letter would have sounded like a business letter, in which he would have had to think about what he wanted to do. However,



Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

Question 2 2C  
(2 of 2)

Since it was repeated, he has to make the decision of doing what he wants to do or to do what his mother wants him to do.

~~It is~~ Throughout the entire letter, you can tell that Abigail Adams knows what she's talking about. I believe that somebody would most likely listen to somebody with a more detailed explanation rather than something simple. Because of the diction, John Quincy Adams will pay more attention to what he's reading. She also used rhetorical questions such as the one in lines 30-32 ("Would Cicero have shone... and Mark Anthony?") This makes the reader ~~stop~~ (John Quincy Adams) stop and think about what their answer would have been.

As you can see, there were many rhetorical devices used in Abigail Adams' letter to her son. Little ~~to~~ devices such as pathos, repetition, diction, and rhetorical questioning can definitely be used when trying to advise somebody, such as John Quincy Adams.

#

# AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

## 2014 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 2

#### Overview

Question 2 presented students with a short letter written by Abigail Adams in 1810 to her son, John Quincy Adams, who, at his parents' urging, had accompanied his father on a diplomatic trip to France. Students were directed to read the letter carefully and then write an essay analyzing "the rhetorical strategies Adams uses to advise her son." Finally, students were directed to support their analysis with specific references to the text. The intent of this question was to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their close reading skills (applied to a pre-20th-century text), to discern Abigail Adams' rhetorical purposes, and to explain how she used written language on a particular occasion in an effort to accomplish those purposes. The choice of the term "rhetorical strategies" rather than "rhetorical devices" was intended to emphasize the priority of *function over form* in rhetorical analysis. The prompt was meant to guide students away from "figure hunting" (i.e., identifying metaphors, assonance, synecdoche, etc.) and toward an account of how Adams intended her letter to function as a means of convincing her son to assume the perspective and embark upon the course of action she was urging him to take. Part of the rhetorical analysis task is constructing the rhetorical context in which language performs its function. In this case, students were helped to construct the context by the date of the letter and by a brief account in the prompt of both the writer and recipient of the letter and the historical moment in which the letter was written. Students could also draw upon their own historical knowledge or understanding of family relationships or class values to supplement this sketch of the context. In requiring students to refer specifically to the text, the prompt invited students to demonstrate their abilities to select and use appropriate textual evidence to illustrate and support the assertions they made about Adams' rhetorical strategies.

#### Sample: 2A

#### Score: 8

This essay effectively analyzes the rhetorical strategies Adams uses to advise her son, beginning with a review of the historical context: "Unaware that her son would become President, she writes to convince her son of travel and of diligence." The writer connects the strategies to Adams' purpose, which is described in detail: "Adams employs a concerned, maternal tone, historical allusions, qualified flattery, patriotic appeals, and lists to impart the importance of maximizing on natural talent by applying oneself." The essay demonstrates a controlled use of language to develop the argument, explaining not simply that Adams appeals to her son's emotions, but that she "instills a sense of guilt" and "invokes a sense of patriotism to call her son to action." The essay ends with another reference to the historical context and a larger view of Adams' purpose: the "desperate hope that by raising him well, she could ensure a bright future for her beloved homeland." For its thorough development and ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing, this essay earned a score of 8.

**AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION**  
**2014 SCORING COMMENTARY**

**Question 2 (continued)**

**Sample: 2B**

**Score: 6**

The essay adequately analyzes the rhetorical strategies Adams uses to advise her son, identifying the overall purpose of Adams' letter: "[S]he wanted the younger Adams to appreciate the chances he had been given and use them to make himself a better man and thinker." The essay connects this purpose with strategies Adams uses: "classical rhetorics such as ethos, pathos, and logos, as well as . . . metaphors and imagery." The student accurately analyzes the strategies, providing a sufficient explanation of tonal shifts and appeals to emotion: "The tonal shift from serious to sensitive . . . is a way for Abigail Adams to show her son that while she is being formal, she still cares." The essay then moves into a discussion of the resulting emotions, concluding that Adams "incites additional emotions in him with philosophical sayings." The essay earned a score of 6 for its adequate explanation and its generally clear prose.

**Sample: 2C**

**Score: 3**

This essay inadequately analyzes the rhetorical strategies Adams uses to advise her son. It attempts to set up an argument and identifies three strategies that Adams' letter uses: "pathos, repetition [*sic*], and diction," but it inadequately analyzes them and fails to explain how they are linked to the author's rhetorical purpose. The essay's explanations are especially simplistic and limited, asserting that Adams uses pathos "to make her son feel some type of guilt," and that "[b]ecause of the diction, John Quincy Adams will pay more attention to what he's reading." The essay is less perceptive in its understanding of Adams's strategies and its prose shows less maturity in control of writing than an essay earning a score of 4.