



AP Lang Exam Overview

Format ↓

Let's break down the exam format:

Part 1 of the Exam - Multiple Choice

- 60 Minutes, 45 Questions
- 5 Passages
- 23-25 Reading Questions
- 20-22 Writing Questions
- 45% of Exam Score

Reading Questions = centered on rhetorical analysis.

Writing Questions = centered on composition [similar to SAT Writing]

Part 2 of the Exam - Free Response

- 2 Hours + 15 Min "Reading Period"
- 1 Synthesis Essay
- 1 Rhetorical Analysis Essay
- 1 Argument Essay
- 55% of Exam Score

All essays are graded on a six point analytical rubric.

- 1 Thesis Point
- 4 Evidence & Commentary Points
- 1 Synthesis Point

Multiple Choice

Exam Part 1 ↓

Let's talk through strategies & examples!

General Strategies:

- Eliminate until you find the least worst answer
- Guess and move on—you don't want to run out of time

Reading Section Strategies:

- Look for author's purpose, exigence, and rhetorical choices while annotating
- Do practice sections under time constraints

Example Q's:

- In lines #-#, the writer cites a hypothetical situation for the purpose of..
- Lines #-# can support which of these claims about the tone of the writer?
- All of the phrases refer to the same idea EXCEPT....

Writing Section Strategies:

- Don't read the passage—focus on the important lines
- Answer in context

Example Q's:

- Which of these choices best establishes the writer's position?
- Where should this sentence be placed?
- All of the pieces of evidence would achieve the author's purpose except which one?

Rhetorical Analysis

FRQ 2 ↓

You'll be **analyzing an author's rhetorical strategies** that help achieve their purpose.

Rhetorical strategies vs devices:

- Strategies typically include multiple devices
- The strategy of appealing to the audience's emotion may use tone shifts and melancholic diction.

ASPECTS helps with writing your thesis & the rhetorical situation:

- Audience, speaker, purpose, exigence (motivation for writing), context, topic/tone

Thesis template: In [his/her genre, optional exigence], [author] speaks on [brief argument summary] and employs the use of [devices/strategies] to convey to [specific audience] of [purpose].

Structuring a Paragraph

- **Introduce** the Strategy
- **WHAT**—embedded quotes of the devices that support the strategy
- **HOW**—why does the device matter & how does it help the author achieve their purpose?
- **WHY [Impact]**—how does it affect the audience

Synthesis & Argument

FRQ 1 & 3

In these two FRQs, you'll be building an effective argument.

The major difference between synthesis and argument is that in the synthesis essay you are given six sources and are required to use at least three in your essay; other than that, the rubric is the same!

Your thesis should **directly answer the prompt and state a position** (don't say that there are pros/cons!).

Structuring a Paragraph:

- **Intro** your subclaim
- **WHAT** evidence proves the subclaims—either synthesis sources OR outside evidence
- **HOW** the evidence proves your subclaim & thesis
- **WHY** the argument matters on a broader level (linked back to thesis as well)

We recommend including two pieces of evidence per body paragraph to demonstrate you can embed evidence into your analysis!

Sophistication can be earned in the following ways:

1. Creating a nuanced thesis
2. Thesis in broader context
3. **Including a concession, rebuttal, or refutation of other arguments**
4. Making effective rhetorical choices that strengthen your argument
5. Using a vivid/convincing style