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AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE · FREE RESOURCE

AP English Language and Composition — Practice Exam 2

Format

SECTION	QUESTIONS	TIME	WEIGHT
Section I: Multiple Choice	45 questions (23–25 Reading, 20–22 Writing), four answer choices (A–D)	60 minutes	45%
Section II: Free Response	3 essays (Synthesis, Rhetorical Analysis, Argument)	2 hours 15 minutes (includes a 15-minute reading period)	55%

Timing. Allow yourself exactly 60 minutes for Section I. Then take the 15-minute reading period and the 2 hours of writing time for Section II without a break between the two parts of Section II. On the real exam, delivered in the Bluebook app, the clock turns red at five minutes remaining and no verbal warnings are given, so practice watching your own time.

General directions. Section I consists of five sets of questions. Two sets ask you to read a published nonfiction passage and answer questions about its content, form, and style. Three sets present a student's draft and ask you to consider revisions the writer could make to improve it. For every question, choose the best of the four answers. There is no penalty for guessing, so answer every question. Pay particular attention to the requirements of questions that contain the words NOT, LEAST, or EXCEPT.

Section II consists of three free-response questions. Each counts for one-third of the Section II score. You may work on the questions in any order and move freely among them.

Section I: Multiple-Choice Questions

Time — 60 minutes. 45 questions.

Passage 1 — Questions 1–12

The following passage is from an essay written for this practice exam in the manner of a mid-nineteenth-century American lecture on nature, of the kind delivered before lyceum audiences and later published in a literary magazine. Read the passage carefully before you choose your answers.

I wish to speak a word for the afternoon—for those hours which the counting-house and the schoolroom agree to regard as the dregs of the day, fit only for the finishing of what the morning began. We have made a ledger of the sun. We rise to our labor as a clerk to his desk, and when the (5) shadows have swung round to the east we draw a line beneath the column and call the account closed. But the afternoon was not made for closing accounts. It is the one hour in which the earth, having been looked at all morning, begins at last to look back.

I have walked out of my village at three o'clock on a day in late October (10) and found myself, within a mile, in a country that no surveyor has ever entered. The road was the same road, the fences the same fences; the farmer's cattle regarded me with the same incurious benevolence. Yet the light had shifted, and with it the ownership of things. In the morning the field belongs to the man who ploughs it; at noon it belongs to no one, (15) being too bright to be looked at; but toward four o'clock, when the sun lies level along the stubble and every stalk throws a shadow longer than itself, the field belongs to whoever has the leisure to stand in it. This is a title the registry of deeds does not record, and it is the only one I have ever cared to hold.

20. My neighbors tell me that a man who walks in the afternoon is a man who has nothing to do. I answer that he is a man who has found something to do which the others have not yet discovered. They are busy; so is the ant; so is the brook, which has been busy these ten thousand years carrying the same hill to the same sea. I do not disparage the brook. But I observe that (25) it has never once been seen to pause upon its bank and consider where it is going, and I am not persuaded that its industry is the better for the omission. Our commerce is a kind of brook. It runs because it must, and it carries much that is valuable, and it never looks up.

There is a notion abroad that Nature is best met early—that the dew is her (30) true element and the lark her only herald. I grant the morning its beauties, but I find them somewhat officious. The morning is forever recommending itself to us; it rings a bell. The afternoon makes no such claims. It does not insist that we rise or improve. It comes to the walker as a friend comes who does not need to be entertained, and sits down beside (35) him, and says nothing, and is the better company for saying it. What the morning promises, the afternoon has already seen through; and yet it is not disillusioned. It has merely stopped expecting, and begun to notice.

I would not be understood to preach idleness. The idle man and the walker may travel the same road, but they do not arrive at the same place; the one (40) is fleeing his work, the other is pursuing a different work, which the world has not yet learned to pay for. When I return at dusk I have, it is true, no bushel to show, no page written, no bargain struck. But I have seen the maple give up its leaves one at a time, as a careful man gives up his opinions; I have heard the first ice in the marsh grass make a sound (45) like a sentence being revised; I have stood in a field and been, for the space of an hour, not its owner, nor its laborer, but its witness. The village, I think, has need of witnesses. It has clerks enough.

Let it not be said, then, that the afternoon is the remnant of the day. It is the day's second thought, and a second thought is commonly the better (50) one. The morning asks what we shall do; the afternoon asks what we have become. If we cannot spare an hour to hear the question, we have perhaps answered it already—and not to our credit.

1. The passage is best understood as a response to which of the following?
- (A) A widespread assumption that the afternoon hours have little value except for completing what the morning began
 - (B) A growing fashion among the writer's neighbors for taking long walks in the countryside
 - (C) A dispute over the legal ownership of farmland near the writer's village
 - (D) A decline in public appreciation for the beauties of the early morning
2. In the first paragraph, the writer's use of the words "ledger" (line 3), "clerk" (line 4), "column" (line 5), and "account" (line 6) primarily serves to
- (A) establish the writer's own experience in the world of business
 - (B) suggest that morning labor is more profitable than afternoon leisure
 - (C) characterize the prevailing attitude toward the day as narrowly commercial
 - (D) praise the orderliness with which most people arrange their hours
3. In lines 13–17 ("In the morning . . . stand in it"), the writer supports the claim that "the ownership of things" (line 13) shifts with the light primarily by
- (A) citing the testimony of the farmer who ploughs the field
 - (B) contrasting the condition of the field at three different times of day
 - (C) describing the legal procedures by which land is transferred
 - (D) comparing the field to a country no surveyor has entered
4. In context, the word "incurious" (line 12) most nearly means
- (A) hostile
 - (B) unintelligent
 - (C) peculiar
 - (D) indifferent
5. The sentence "I do not disparage the brook" (line 24) functions primarily to
- (A) concede a point before qualifying the comparison that follows
 - (B) retract the writer's earlier criticism of his neighbors
 - (C) present the brook as a model for human conduct
 - (D) admit that the writer's own habits are idle
6. The writer's extended comparison of commerce to a brook (lines 22–28) primarily serves to
- (A) celebrate the productivity of the writer's community
 - (B) illustrate that purposeful activity is not the same as reflective activity
 - (C) argue that natural processes are superior to human ones
 - (D) demonstrate that the writer's neighbors are unaware of their surroundings
7. The sentence "I grant the morning its beauties, but I find them somewhat officious" (lines 30–31) suggests that the writer assumes his audience
- (A) has rarely risen early enough to witness the morning
 - (B) will be offended by any criticism of nature
 - (C) secretly prefers the afternoon but is reluctant to admit it
 - (D) holds a conventional admiration for the morning that he must acknowledge before challenging it
8. In the sentence beginning "It comes to the walker" (lines 33–35), the accumulation of clauses joined by "and" primarily serves to
- (A) create a sense of hurried activity that mirrors the busyness of commerce

- (B) emphasize the number of tasks a walker must complete before dusk
- (C) enact the unhurried, undemanding companionship the writer attributes to the afternoon
- (D) suggest that the writer's thoughts have become disorganized
9. The statement "I would not be understood to preach idleness" (line 38) primarily serves to
- (A) anticipate and address a likely objection to the writer's argument
- (B) confess that the writer has at times been idle
- (C) reject entirely the neighbors' definition of work
- (D) shift the subject of the essay from the afternoon to the nature of labor
10. Which of the following best describes the relationship between the fifth paragraph (lines 38–47) and the paragraphs that precede it?
- (A) It abandons the earlier argument in favor of a personal anecdote.
- (B) It restates the thesis of the first paragraph in more technical language.
- (C) It concedes that the neighbors' view of the walker is largely accurate.
- (D) It distinguishes the writer's position from one with which it might be confused and then offers evidence of what the afternoon yields.
11. The tone of the final paragraph (lines 48–52) is best described as
- (A) wistful
- (B) admonitory
- (C) exultant
- (D) conciliatory
12. Which of the following best states the overarching claim of the passage?
- (A) People who walk in the afternoon accomplish more than those who work through it.
- (B) The morning is overrated because its beauties are too insistent to be enjoyed.
- (C) Unhurried attention to the world is a form of work whose value society has not yet learned to recognize.
- (D) Commerce has destroyed the capacity of villagers to appreciate nature.

Passage 2 — Questions 13–24

The following passage is from an essay written for this practice exam in the manner of a popular science article published in an American general-interest magazine in the 1920s. Read the passage carefully before you choose your answers.

Of all the habits of the human animal, none is so universal and so little understood as sleep. We spend a third of our lives in it; we resent its interruption more fiercely than the loss of a meal; and yet, if a visitor from another planet were to ask us what it is for, the most learned (5) physiologist among us could only answer, with some embarrassment, that it appears to be for resting. This is rather like explaining the purpose of a railway by remarking that trains are frequently observed to stand still.

The older view, which still lingers in the schoolbooks, held that sleep is a kind of nightly bankruptcy. The body, having spent its capital of energy (10) during the day, closes its doors, and the tissues are quietly refilled while the proprietor is absent. There is truth in this, but it does not go far. A man who lies perfectly still in a darkened room for eight hours, resolutely awake, is not refreshed; he is exhausted. Rest alone will not do what sleep does. Something happens in sleep that does not happen in mere (15) quiet, and the whole modern inquiry is an effort to say what that something is.

The laboratory has begun to furnish hints. In Chicago, in Leipzig, and in a converted farmhouse in New England, investigators have taken to sitting up all night beside sleeping volunteers with stop-watches and notebooks, (20) recording the depth of slumber by the loudness of the sound required to disturb it. Their curves are remarkably alike. Sleep is not the level plain the poets have imagined, but a landscape of hills and valleys. Within an hour of lying down the sleeper descends into a profound trough from which a dropped book will not rouse him; then, by slow degrees, he climbs again (25) toward the surface; then sinks, less deeply; and so on through the night, until the final slopes deliver him, often without his knowledge, to the morning. The pattern holds in the banker and the ploughboy alike. It is as regular as the tide, and as indifferent to our opinion of it.

What is the mind doing on these descents? Here the evidence grows thinner (30) and the speculation thicker. One school holds that the brain, like a busy harbor, can take in cargo all day only if it is permitted to sort and warehouse it at night; that what we call memory is not the receiving of impressions but the filing of them, and that the filing is done in the dark. The experiments are suggestive. Students who learned a list of (35) nonsense syllables and then slept remembered more of them in the morning than students who learned the same list and then spent an equal interval reading the newspaper. The newspaper, it seems, was the enemy—not because it was dull, but because it was new. Every fresh impression jostled the old ones before they had been put away.

40. I should be sorry to leave the reader with the notion that the matter is settled. It is not. The harbor theory explains why we forget less after sleep; it does not explain why the sleeper who is denied his deepest trough wakes irritable and stupid even when he has slept the full eight hours. Nor does it explain the dream, which has resisted the laboratory as stubbornly (45) as it has resisted the interpreters. We have measured the depth of sleep; we have not measured its contents.

And yet it is something—it is a good deal—to have learned that the night is not empty. For centuries we have regarded sleep as the absence of life, a small rehearsal of death to be got through as quickly as decency allowed. (50) The new work suggests the reverse: that sleep is one of the body's most strenuous occupations, and that the man who boasts of needing only five hours is boasting, in effect, of leaving half his correspondence unanswered. The boast will seem less impressive as the science advances. We shall come, I think, to regard the well-slept man as we now regard the (55) well-read one—not as a loafer who has found an excuse, but as a person who has attended to something the rest of us have neglected.

13. The primary purpose of the passage is to

- (A) argue that physicians should prescribe longer hours of sleep for their patients
- (B) ridicule physiologists who cannot explain what sleep is for
- (C) describe in detail the methods used in sleep laboratories
- (D) explain what recent investigations have revealed about sleep while acknowledging the limits of that knowledge

14. The comparison to a railway (lines 6–7) primarily serves to

- (A) expose the inadequacy of describing sleep merely as rest
- (B) suggest that sleep, like travel, is a means of reaching a destination
- (C) mock the visitor from another planet for asking a naïve question
- (D) illustrate the regularity with which sleep recurs each night

15. The sentence “There is truth in this, but it does not go far” (lines 11–12) functions to

- (A) dismiss the older view of sleep as entirely mistaken
- (B) qualify the older view before presenting evidence of its insufficiency

- (C) endorse the schoolbooks against the findings of modern inquiry
(D) introduce the metaphor of bankruptcy that follows
- 16.** The writer presents the example of the man who lies still but awake (lines 12–13) primarily as evidence that
(A) darkness is more restorative than daylight
(B) eight hours is an insufficient period of rest
(C) rest and sleep are not equivalent
(D) insomnia is a product of modern life
- 17.** The third paragraph (lines 17–28) develops its account of sleep primarily through
(A) a description of a process organized by a controlling metaphor
(B) a chronological narrative of a single volunteer's night
(C) a comparison between the habits of bankers and ploughboys
(D) a refutation of what poets have written about sleep
- 18.** The reference to “the banker and the ploughboy” (line 27) most directly appeals to the audience's
(A) suspicion of scientific authority
(B) nostalgia for rural life
(C) interest in financial matters
(D) sense that the findings apply to everyone regardless of social station
- 19.** The question that opens the fourth paragraph (line 29) and the sentence that follows it (lines 29–30) together serve to
(A) suggest the writer's own confusion about the subject
(B) signal a transition from established findings to more tentative hypotheses
(C) challenge the reader to propose an answer
(D) summarize the conclusions of the preceding paragraph
- 20.** The dash in line 37 primarily serves to
(A) indicate an abrupt interruption in the writer's train of thought
(B) set off an aside unrelated to the experiment being described
(C) introduce a correction of the reader's probable assumption about why the newspaper interfered with memory
(D) emphasize the dullness of newspapers
- 21.** In the fifth paragraph (lines 40–46), the writer qualifies the “harbor theory” (line 41) by
(A) rejecting the experimental evidence that supports it
(B) attributing it to poets rather than to scientists
(C) proposing an alternative theory of dreams
(D) identifying phenomena that the theory does not account for
- 22.** Which of the following best describes the line of reasoning of the passage as a whole?
(A) It establishes that sleep is poorly understood, exposes the inadequacy of an older explanation, reports new findings, acknowledges their limits, and reinterprets the significance of sleep.
(B) It narrates the history of sleep research in chronological order from antiquity to the present.
(C) It presents two competing theories of sleep and argues decisively in favor of one.
(D) It describes a single laboratory experiment and then generalizes from it to all human behavior.

- 23.** In context, the word “strenuous” (line 51) most nearly means
- (A) exhausting
 - (B) painful
 - (C) actively demanding
 - (D) difficult to understand
- 24.** The final sentence of the passage (lines 53–56) suggests that the writer anticipates an audience that
- (A) is already persuaded by the findings of the new science
 - (B) tends to admire those who sleep little and to regard long sleepers as idle
 - (C) doubts the value of being well-read
 - (D) has personally taken part in sleep experiments

Passage 3 — Questions 25–32

The passage below is a draft written by a student for an argumentative essay on higher education. Read the passage carefully. Then answer the questions that follow, choosing the revision that best accomplishes the goal stated in each question.

1. In 1947, a presidential commission on higher education recommended that public education be made free through the first two years of college, arguing that “the time has come” to extend the principle of free schooling beyond the twelfth grade. (2) Nearly eighty years later, that recommendation remains largely unfulfilled. (3) Community colleges should be tuition-free.
 2. Supporters of free tuition point out that the price of community college, though modest compared with four-year institutions, is often the deciding factor for students from low-income families. (5) A student working twenty hours a week at minimum wage can still fall short of covering tuition, fees, and books, and many such students enroll part-time or leave before completing a credential. (6) When several states eliminated community college tuition for recent high school graduates, enrollment among first-generation students rose sharply. (7) These programs also appear to improve completion rates, since students who are not working extra hours to pay tuition have more time to attend class and study.
 3. Critics argue that free tuition is a poor use of public money because it subsidizes students who could afford to pay. (9) However, the same objection could be made of public high schools, which educate the children of the wealthy at no charge, and few people regard that arrangement as unjust. (10) The question is not whether some beneficiaries could pay but whether a society benefits from having more of its members educated, and the evidence suggests that it does.
- 25.** The writer wants to revise sentence 3 (reproduced below) so that it presents a defensible claim and previews the structure of the argument.

Community colleges should be tuition-free.

Which of the following versions best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) Community colleges should be tuition-free because education is a human right.
- (B) Although many people disagree, community colleges should definitely be made tuition-free as soon as possible.
- (C) Community colleges, which enroll nearly half of all undergraduates in the United States, are an important

part of higher education.

(D) Because tuition is the decisive barrier for many low-income students, and because a more educated population benefits everyone, community colleges should be tuition-free.

26. The writer wants to add specific evidence after sentence 6 to support the claim that enrollment “rose sharply.” Which of the following would best accomplish this goal?

(A) Many students have said that free tuition made them feel more welcome on campus.

(B) In one state, first-generation enrollment increased by roughly 25 percent in the two years after the program began, compared with a 3 percent increase in neighboring states without such programs.

(C) Free tuition programs have been debated in state legislatures across the country.

(D) Community colleges offer a wide range of programs, including nursing, welding, and computer science.

27. The writer wants to add a transition at the beginning of sentence 7 to clarify the relationship between the ideas in sentences 6 and 7. Which of the following best accomplishes this goal?

(A) Beyond enrollment,

(B) In contrast,

(C) For example,

(D) As a result,

28. The writer wants to acknowledge a counterargument in the second paragraph without undermining the position of the passage. Which of the following sentences, if added after sentence 5, would best accomplish this goal?

(A) Of course, some people believe that college is not for everyone, and they are entitled to their opinion.

(B) Nobody can deny that tuition is the only obstacle facing low-income students.

(C) To be sure, federal grants already cover tuition for the poorest students, but they often fail to reach those whose families earn slightly too much to qualify yet too little to pay.

(D) Opponents of free tuition are mostly people who never had to worry about paying for college.

29. The writer wants sentence 8 (reproduced below) to represent more fairly and precisely the view of skeptical taxpayers, who are the intended audience of the passage.

Critics argue that free tuition is a poor use of public money because it subsidizes students who could afford to pay.

Which of the following versions best accomplishes this goal?

(A) Critics, who do not care about low-income students, argue that free tuition wastes public money.

(B) Critics argue that free tuition is a terrible idea.

(C) Critics argue that free tuition is a poor use of public money because the money could be better spent on things like roads.

(D) Critics argue that universal free tuition is a poor use of limited public money because it spends scarce dollars on students who could afford to pay, rather than targeting aid to those who cannot.

30. The writer wants to add a sentence after sentence 9 that explains how the comparison to public high schools supports the line of reasoning. Which of the following best accomplishes this goal?

(A) If we accept that free schooling through the twelfth grade serves the public good regardless of who could pay for it, the same logic extends to the two years of college that have become the new threshold for stable employment.

- (B) Public high schools were established in the nineteenth century and have been free ever since.
(C) This shows that critics of free tuition are wrong.
(D) Many wealthy families, of course, send their children to private high schools instead.

31. In sentence 10 (reproduced below), the writer wants to maintain the measured, formal tone of the passage while making the closing clause more emphatic.

The question is not whether some beneficiaries could pay but whether a society benefits from having more of its members educated, and the evidence suggests that it does.

Which of the following versions of the underlined portion ("and the evidence suggests that it does") best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) and obviously it totally does
(B) and anyone who has looked at the numbers already knows the answer
(C) and the evidence, from rising enrollment to improved completion, points firmly toward yes
(D) and that is a question I will leave to the reader

32. Which of the following sentences, if added at the end of the passage, would best serve as a concluding sentence that reinforces the writer's line of reasoning?

- (A) In conclusion, community colleges are important institutions.
(B) The 1947 commission saw free public education through the fourteenth grade as the logical next step for a democracy; eighty years of evidence has only made that step more overdue.
(C) Students should also consider applying for scholarships and part-time jobs to reduce their costs.
(D) Four-year universities should be made free as well, since they face many of the same problems.

Passage 4 — Questions 33–40

The passage below is a draft written by a student for an argumentative essay on school schedules. Read the passage carefully. Then answer the questions that follow, choosing the revision that best accomplishes the goal stated in each question.

1. Most high schools in the United States begin classes before 8:00 a.m., and many begin before 7:30. (2) For the student who plays a sport, the day often ends with practice at 6:00 p.m., followed by dinner, homework, and a bedtime that drifts toward midnight. (3) Sleep researchers have known for decades that adolescent bodies release melatonin, the hormone that signals sleepiness, roughly two hours later than adult bodies do, which means that a teenager told to sleep at 10:00 p.m. is being asked to do something biologically difficult. (4) Schools should move their start times later, and student-athletes are the group for whom the change matters most.
2. The case for later start times rests on sleep, athletes need more of it than other students. (6) Hard training breaks down muscle tissue, and the body repairs that tissue chiefly during deep sleep. (7) Athletes who sleep fewer than eight hours a night have been found to suffer injuries at a markedly higher rate than teammates who sleep more. (8) Reaction time, which matters in nearly every sport, also declines measurably after even one short night.
3. Some administrators object that later start times would push practices and games into the evening and disrupt bus schedules. (10) These are real problems. (11) Districts that have made the change report that the first year is difficult and that most families adjust by the second.

33. Which of the following versions of sentence 5 (reproduced below) best corrects an error in sentence structure?

The case for later start times rests on sleep, athletes need more of it than other students.

- A. The case for later start times rests on sleep, and athletes need more of it than other students do.
- B. The case for later start times rests on sleep, since athletes needing more of it than other students.
- C. The case for later start times, resting on sleep, athletes need more of it than other students.
- D. The case for later start times rests on sleep athletes need more of it than other students.

34. The writer wants to revise sentence 3 so that it conveys its ideas more clearly. Which of the following versions best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) Sleep researchers have known that adolescent bodies release melatonin, the hormone that signals sleepiness, and this is for decades, roughly two hours later than adults.
- (B) Melatonin is a hormone that signals sleepiness, and sleep researchers have known about it for decades, and adolescents release it later than adults, roughly two hours.
- (C) For decades, sleep researchers have known about melatonin.
- (D) For decades, sleep researchers have known that adolescents release melatonin, the hormone that signals sleepiness, about two hours later than adults do; a teenager told to sleep at 10:00 p.m. is therefore being asked to do something biologically difficult.

35. The writer wants to add specific evidence after sentence 7 to support the claim that sleep reduces the rate of injury. Which of the following would best accomplish this goal?

- (A) Coaches often tell their players to get a good night's sleep before a game.
- (B) In a study of several hundred adolescent athletes, those who slept at least eight hours a night were about two-thirds less likely to be injured over a season than those who slept less.
- (C) Injuries are a serious problem in high school sports, especially in football and soccer.
- (D) Many athletes report feeling tired during their morning classes.

36. The writer wants to develop the second paragraph further by adding a sentence that uses cause-and-effect reasoning to connect sleep to athletic performance. Which of the following sentences, if added after sentence 8, would best accomplish this goal?

- (A) Professional athletes are famous for sleeping ten or more hours a night.
- (B) Sleep is important for everyone, not just for athletes.
- (C) Because deep sleep is when the brain consolidates the motor patterns practiced during the day, an athlete who shortens that sleep is effectively erasing part of the afternoon's practice.
- (D) Some athletes nap after school to make up for lost sleep.

37. The writer wants to revise sentence 10 (reproduced below) so that it addresses the concerns of school administrators more persuasively.

These are real problems.

Which of the following versions best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) These are real problems, but administrators should stop making excuses.
- (B) These are not real problems.
- (C) These are real problems, and they probably cannot be solved.
- (D) These are real problems, and the districts that have solved them have done so by sharing fields with middle schools, staggering bus routes, and scheduling some games on weekends.

38. The writer wants to add a transition at the beginning of sentence 11 to clarify its relationship to sentence 10. Which of the following best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) Yet
- (B) Therefore,
- (C) Similarly,
- (D) In other words,

39. The writer wants to qualify the claim in sentence 4 (reproduced below) so that it is more defensible.

Schools should move their start times later, and student-athletes are the group for whom the change matters most.

Which of the following versions best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) Schools must move their start times later immediately, and student-athletes are the only group that matters.
- (B) Schools should move their start times later, and student-athletes, whose days are longest and whose bodies demand the most recovery, are among the groups for whom the change matters most.
- (C) Schools should move their start times later, and every student-athlete will benefit equally.
- (D) Schools might possibly think about start times at some point, although it may not matter very much.

40. Which of the following sentences, if added at the end of the passage, would best conclude the passage by reinforcing the writer's line of reasoning?

- (A) In conclusion, sleep is very important for teenagers.
- (B) Student-athletes should also eat a healthy diet and stay hydrated.
- (C) A schedule that asks teenagers to train like athletes and then sleep like adults serves neither goal; a later start time is the one change that serves both.
- (D) Many countries start school later than the United States does.

Passage 5 — Questions 41–45

The passage below is a draft written by a student for an expository essay on media. Read the passage carefully. Then answer the questions that follow, choosing the revision that best accomplishes the goal stated in each question.

1. Twenty years ago, the word “podcast” required a definition; today roughly half of Americans say they have listened to one in the past month. (2) The format has grown from a hobby for technology enthusiasts into a major medium for news, storytelling, and conversation. (3) Podcasts are popular for many reasons.
2. Unlike radio, a podcast can be paused, resumed, and played at any hour, so it fits into the gaps of a day—a commute, a workout, a sink full of dishes. (5) Unlike video, it leaves the eyes free. (6) Perhaps most important, the medium favors length and informality, a podcast interview may run two hours and wander, and listeners come to feel that they know the hosts. (7) Critics worry that this intimacy makes listeners too trusting of hosts who have no editors and few constraints. (8) This is a concern worth taking seriously, but it is also a reminder that the medium's weakness and its appeal are the same thing.

41. The writer wants to revise sentence 3 (reproduced below) so that it presents a defensible claim and previews the structure of the second paragraph.

Podcasts are popular for many reasons.

Which of the following versions best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) Podcasts are popular because they are free.
- (B) Everyone loves podcasts, and it is easy to see why.
- (C) Podcasts are a form of audio entertainment that can be downloaded to a phone.
- (D) The format's rise owes less to any single hit show than to three features of the medium itself: its flexibility, its freedom from the screen, and its intimacy.

42. Which of the following versions of sentence 6 (reproduced below) best corrects an error in sentence structure?

Perhaps most important, the medium favors length and informality, a podcast interview may run two hours and wander, and listeners come to feel that they know the hosts.

- A. Perhaps most important, the medium favors length and informality: a podcast interview may run two hours and wander, and listeners come to feel that they know the hosts.
- B. Perhaps most important, the medium favors length and informality, a podcast interview may run two hours, wander, and listeners come to feel that they know the hosts.
- C. Perhaps most important, the medium favoring length and informality, a podcast interview may run two hours and wander, listeners come to feel that they know the hosts.
- D. Perhaps most important, the medium favors length and informality, and a podcast interview may run two hours and wander, listeners come to feel that they know the hosts.

43. The writer wants to add a sentence after sentence 5 that develops the idea of that sentence while maintaining the concrete, lightly informal style of the passage. Which of the following best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) Furthermore, the auditory modality facilitates multitasking across a diverse array of quotidian activities.
- (B) It is really cool that you can listen while doing other stuff.
- (C) A listener can fold laundry, drive a carpool, or stare out a train window and still follow every word.
- (D) Statistics indicate that 62 percent of listeners engage in concurrent activities.

44. The writer wants to add a sentence after sentence 8 that explains the claim that "the medium's weakness and its appeal are the same thing." Which of the following best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) Podcasts are great, and critics should relax.
- (B) The unedited, rambling conversation that lets a listener come to trust a host is precisely what lets an unreliable host be trusted.
- (C) Many podcasts do, in fact, have editors and producers.
- (D) In conclusion, podcasts have both strengths and weaknesses.

45. The writer wants to add a sentence at the beginning of the passage to introduce the topic and engage the audience. Which of the following best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) This essay will discuss the rise of podcasts.
- (B) Podcasts are audio programs distributed over the internet.
- (C) I personally listen to podcasts every day and think they are great.
- (D) Somewhere right now, a person washing dishes is listening to two strangers talk for an hour about the history of salt—and is not bored.

END OF SECTION I. If you finish before time is called, you may check your work on this section.

Section II: Free-Response Questions

Total time — 2 hours and 15 minutes (15-minute reading period, then 2 hours of writing time)

Number of questions — 3. Each question counts for one-third of the total Section II score. The suggested time is 55 minutes for Question 1 (15 minutes of reading and planning, then 40 minutes of writing) and 40 minutes each for Questions 2 and 3. You may begin writing at any time, and you may work on the questions in any order.

Question 1 (Synthesis)

Suggested time — 55 minutes (including the 15-minute reading period). This question counts for one-third of the total Section II score.

The sources below were written for this practice exam and are modeled on the types of sources that appear on the AP Exam; statistics are illustrative. Organizations, publications, and people named in the sources are invented.

Over the past two decades, a growing number of states and school districts have required high school students to complete a set number of community service hours before they can graduate. Supporters say such requirements build civic habits and connect schools to their communities. Critics say that compulsory service is a contradiction in terms and that the requirement can burden students who are already stretched thin. Several state legislatures are now considering whether to adopt or repeal such requirements.

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source. Then synthesize information from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-developed essay in which you develop a position on the extent to which high schools should require community service hours for graduation.

Make sure that your argument is central; use the sources to illustrate and support your reasoning. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

Source A (Quinn)

Source B (Rosen and Okafor)

Source C (Haines)

Source D (Harlan Institute table)

Source E (Navarro interview)

Source F (cartoon)

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.
-

Source A

Quinn, Marisol. "Senate Approves Graduation Service Requirement." *The Ashford Ledger*, 12 Mar. 2024.

The following is excerpted from a news article in a regional daily newspaper reporting on a vote in a state legislature.

The state Senate voted 22–17 on Monday to require every public high school student to complete 60 hours of community service before receiving a diploma, sending the bill to the House, where its prospects are uncertain.

Sponsor Sen. Patricia Lindqvist, a former middle school teacher, said the measure would give students "a reason to look up from their phones and see who lives next door." Under the bill, hours could be completed at nonprofit organizations, government agencies, or houses of worship, and districts would be directed to offer a one-credit seminar in which students reflect on their experiences. The bill would take effect with the class of 2028.

Opponents argued that the mandate was an unfunded burden on schools and families. Sen. Walter Adeyemi, who voted no, noted that nearly a third of the state's high school seniors hold paying jobs. "We are telling a seventeen-year-old who works at a grocery store until ten at night that she must also find sixty unpaid hours," he said. "That is not civic education. That is a tax on her time."

The state education department estimated that administering the program would cost districts between \$40 and \$90 per student per year, depending on how many staff members were needed to verify placements. Supporters said the cost was modest. Three neighboring states already have similar requirements, and a fourth is expected to vote on one this spring.

Source B

Rosen, Anita, and Daniel Okafor. "Required Service and Adult Civic Habits." *Journal of Youth Civic Development*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2021, pp. 88–104.

The following is excerpted from a peer-reviewed article in which two education researchers summarize a long-term study of high school graduates.

Advocates for service requirements often assume that any service, however it begins, plants the seeds of lifelong civic engagement. Our data complicate this assumption. We followed 3,100 graduates of 48 high schools for eight years. Graduates of schools that required service were, on average, modestly more likely to report volunteering and voting as adults than graduates of schools without a requirement. But this average conceals a sharp difference between programs.

Where the requirement included structured reflection—regular discussion, writing, or debriefing with a teacher or community partner—graduates were substantially more likely to continue volunteering and to describe their service as "meaningful." Where hours were simply logged and signed off, the effects were small and in some schools indistinguishable from zero. A subset of students in such programs reported that the experience made them less interested in volunteering, since it had come to seem "like an obligation that school invented."

We do not conclude that mandates are futile. We conclude that the mandate itself is not the active ingredient. Compulsion may open a door for students who would not otherwise have walked through it; what happens on the other side of that door determines whether they return. Policymakers who adopt hour requirements without resourcing the reflection, supervision, and partnerships that give hours their meaning may be purchasing a statistic rather than a habit.

Source C

Haines, Gregory. "You Cannot Mandate a Virtue." *The Midland Review*, 4 Oct. 2023.

The following is excerpted from an opinion column in a regional newspaper by a retired high school principal.

I spent thirty-one years in public schools, and I have signed my name to more than a thousand volunteer-hour verification forms. I can tell you what most of them were worth.

A kid who has to produce forty hours by June does not ask, "Where am I needed?" He asks, "Where is the easiest place to get a signature?" I have watched students stack chairs at a church for three hours, then spend two more waiting for a supervisor to find a pen. I have also watched a girl whose mother was ill spend every weekend caring for younger cousins, and I have had to tell her that her care did not "count," because it was not performed for an approved organization.

Service is a gift, and a gift that is compelled is a tax. Our graduation requirements should certify that a young person has learned to read, to reason, and to write. They should not turn generosity into coursework. Worse, a requirement punishes those who already carry the heaviest loads: students with jobs, with siblings to mind, with no car and no ride to the food pantry across town.

If we want young people to serve, let us honor those who do, build programs worth joining, and trust the rest to follow the example. A teenager who chooses to serve is a citizen. A teenager who is compelled to serve is, at best, a clerk of his own conscience.

Source D

Harlan Institute for Civic Research. *Service Requirements in U.S. High Schools: A 2024 Survey of Graduates*. Harlan Institute, 2024, p. 17.

The following table is drawn from a national survey report published by a nonpartisan research organization. Respondents were graduates surveyed one year after leaving high school; percentages are rounded.

Table 1. Graduates' volunteering and attitudes, by type of school service policy (n = 6,400)

SCHOOL POLICY	VOLUNTEERED AT LEAST ONCE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	DESCRIBED THEIR HIGH SCHOOL SERVICE AS "MEANINGFUL"	DESCRIBED THEIR HIGH SCHOOL SERVICE AS "MOSTLY A BOX TO CHECK"
Required hours with structured reflection	54%	71%	19%
Required hours with no reflection component	38%	33%	61%
No requirement; service recognized (transcript notation, awards)	41%	58%	17%
No requirement; no school service program	31%	not applicable	not applicable

Note: “Meaningful” and “box to check” percentages are calculated among respondents who completed any school-related service.

Source E

Navarro, Teresa. Interview by Dev Patel. “Sixty Hours, and What Came After.” *The Student Voice Podcast Blog*, 9 Nov. 2024.

The following is excerpted from a written transcript of an interview with a college freshman about her state’s 60-hour high school service requirement.

PATEL: You said you resented the requirement at first.

NAVARRO: Completely. I had a job at a pharmacy and a younger brother I picked up from school every day. When my counselor told me I needed sixty hours, I thought, I do not have sixty hours. I have sixty minutes, and I need them for sleep.

PATEL: What changed?

NAVARRO: The only slot that fit my schedule was Saturday mornings at a food pantry. I went the first month because I had to. By the second month, the director knew my name. She started asking me to help with the Spanish-speaking families, because my Spanish is better than the other volunteers’. That was the first time anybody had asked me for something that wasn’t a grade.

PATEL: Did you keep going after the sixty hours?

NAVARRO: I’m still going. Honestly, I would never have walked in the door if the school hadn’t made me. But I also know people in my class who did their hours at an office, filing, and never talked to a single person who benefited. They forgot about it the day they graduated. So I don’t think the requirement is the thing that works. It depends on whether somebody asks you to be a person instead of a time sheet.

Source F

“Sign Here.” Cartoon by L. M. Okonkwo. *The Midland Review*, 21 May 2024.

The following is an editorial cartoon published in a regional newspaper.

[Image description: A cartoon set in a community soup kitchen. Behind a long counter, a weary volunteer ladles soup into bowls for a line of people who wait with trays. At the front of the line, instead of a tray, a teenager in a school hoodie holds out a clipboard and a pen toward the volunteer. The teenager’s backpack is stamped “60 HOURS OR NO DIPLOMA.” The volunteer, still ladling, glances at the clipboard with a tired expression. A speech bubble from the teenager reads: “Thanks for letting me help. Can you sign this?” In the background, a person at the head of the line looks down at an empty bowl.]

Question 2 (Rhetorical Analysis)

Suggested time — 40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total Section II score.

The following passage is excerpted from the “Declaration of Sentiments,” a document drafted principally by Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902), a leading American reformer and advocate for women’s rights. Stanton presented the Declaration at the Woman’s Rights Convention, held in Seneca Falls, New York, in July 1848, where it was discussed, amended, and signed by one hundred attendees. Modeled closely on the Declaration of Independence, it was meant to be read aloud to an audience of convention participants and to be published in newspapers for a wider public. Ellipses indicate omitted passages. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Stanton makes to convey her argument that women are entitled to equal rights as citizens.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men—both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master—the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.

...

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.

...

He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation—in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of these United States.

...

Resolved, That all laws which prevent woman from occupying such a station in society as her conscience shall dictate, or which place her in a position inferior to that of man, are contrary to the great precept of nature, and therefore of no force or authority.

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 specific and relevant evidence to illustrate and clearly support a line of reasoning.
- Explain how the writer's use of rhetorical choices contributes to the writer's argument or purpose.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Question 3 (Argument)

Suggested time — 40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total Section II score.

In 1894, the Irish writer Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), celebrated for his plays, essays, and wit, contributed a set of aphorisms to a student magazine at Oxford. Among them was this line: "Ambition is the last refuge of failure." Wilde's remark is a joke with an edge, and it raises a serious question: whether striving to rise is a sign of dissatisfaction with who we are, or whether contentment is a more admirable way to live than ambition.

Write an essay that argues your position on the extent to which Wilde's claim about ambition is valid.

In your response you should do the following.

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Provide evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

END OF EXAM

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