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AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE · FREE RESOURCE

MCQ Error Log and Timed Writing Calendar

Two tracking tools. The error log turns every missed multiple-choice question into a pattern you can fix. The calendar spaces out timed writing so you practice all three essays regularly without burning out.

Part 1: The MCQ Error Log

Missed questions are the most valuable data you have. A score tells you *how much* you missed; the log tells you *why*. Fill in one row for every question you miss, the same day you miss it.

How to fill in each column

- **Source and question:** e.g., "Practice Exam 2, Q17."
- **Skill:** use the skill code from the answer key (1.A, 3.B, 6.C, and so on).
- **Question type:** function of a sentence, tone, word in context, revision, and so on.
- **Why I missed it:** pick one cause code from the list below.
- **What I will do next time:** one concrete action, written as a command.

Cause codes

CODE	MEANING	TYPICAL FIX
R	Misread the passage or the stem	Underline what the question asks before reading choices
V	Did not know a word	Add the word to your vocabulary list
T	Did not know the term or device	Review the Rhetorical Terms Master Glossary
E	Eliminated the right answer too early	Find evidence <i>against</i> a choice before crossing it out
D	Fell for a distractor (too broad, too narrow, opposite, true but irrelevant)	Name the distractor type in the log

CODE	MEANING	TYPICAL FIX
S	Ran out of time or rushed	Use the pacing plan: about 80 seconds per question
G	Guessed with no strategy	Eliminate at least one choice before guessing
W	Writing question: picked a choice that sounded good but did not meet the stated goal	Re-read the goal in the stem and test every choice against it

Blank log (copy as many pages as you need)

SOURCE / Q#	SKILL	QUESTION TYPE	CAUSE CODE	WHY I CHOSE THE WRONG ANSWER	NEXT TIME I WILL...

Example entries

SOURCE / Q#	SKILL	QUESTION TYPE	CAUSE CODE	WHY I CHOSE THE WRONG ANSWER	NEXT TIME I WILL...
Practice Exam 2, Q17	5.B	Function of a paragraph	D	I picked "provides background" but the paragraph actually sets up the counterargument; the answer was true but too narrow	Ask "what does this paragraph <i>do</i> for the argument?" before reading the choices
Practice Exam 2, Q31	6.C	Revision: transition	W	The choice I picked sounded smooth, but it did not show the contrast the stem asked for	Underline the relationship the stem asks for (contrast, cause, example) and test each choice

Monthly pattern review

At the end of every two weeks, count your errors by skill and by cause code.

SKILL CATEGORY	ERRORS THIS PERIOD	ERRORS LAST PERIOD	TREND
1: Rhetorical situation (reading)			
2: Rhetorical situation (writing)			
3: Claims and evidence (reading)			
4: Claims and evidence (writing)			
5: Reasoning and organization (reading)			
6: Reasoning and organization (writing)			
7: Style (reading)			
8: Style (writing)			

CAUSE CODE	COUNT
R, V, T, E, D, S, G, W	

Read the table like a doctor. If most of your errors are one cause code, fix that habit first. If most are one skill category, spend your next study block there.

Part 2: Timed Writing Calendar

The weekly rhythm

Aim for **one full timed essay per week** (40 minutes), rotating the three types, plus **two short drills** (15 minutes each) on thesis writing or commentary. A timed essay without reflection teaches you little, so always complete the reflection sheet in the Essay Planners document.

Sample 12-week calendar

WEEK	TIMED ESSAY (40 MIN)	SHORT DRILL (15 MIN)	REFLECTION FOCUS
1	Argument	Write 5 theses for 5 different prompts	Did my thesis take a position?
2	Rhetorical analysis	Run SOAPSTone on a new passage	Did I name choices, not just devices?
3	Synthesis	Annotate a source set in 15 minutes	Did I put sources in conversation?
4	Argument	Write 3 paragraphs of commentary on given evidence	Did I explain <i>how</i> , not just <i>what</i> ?
5	Rhetorical analysis	Rewrite a weak thesis three ways	Did I link choices to purpose?

WEEK	TIMED ESSAY (40 MIN)	SHORT DRILL (15 MIN)	REFLECTION FOCUS
6	Synthesis	Write a thesis and a counterargument paragraph	Did I qualify or concede?
7	Argument	Add a sophistication move to an old essay	Was the move sustained?
8	Rhetorical analysis	Analyze a short passage in 20 minutes	Pacing check
9	Synthesis	Choose three sources and justify each	Did I cite clearly?
10	Argument	Revise a prior essay for line of reasoning	Does each paragraph build?
11	Full FRQ section (all 3 essays, 2 hours 15 minutes)	None	Stamina and timing
12	Choose the type you scored lowest on	Review the error log	Plan for the final weeks

Blank calendar

WEEK OF	ESSAY TYPE	PROMPT	TIME USED	SCORE (A / B / C)	ONE THING TO FIX

Tips for keeping the calendar honest

- **Time yourself for real.** An untimed essay measures something else.
- **Score the essay against the rubric**, not against your feelings about it. Use the peer-review checklist and the Rubrics Decoded guide.
- **Keep every essay.** In a month, rereading your first thesis next to your latest one is the best evidence you will ever see that practice works.
- **Rotate prompt types.** The Rhetorical Analysis essay has historically been the lowest-scoring of the three, so give it extra weeks if it is your weakest.

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