

Question 2

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

On April 10, 1962, as the United States was emerging from a recession, the nation's largest steel companies raised steel prices by 3.5 percent. President John F. Kennedy, who had repeatedly called for stable prices and wages as part of a program of national sacrifice during a period of economic distress, held a news conference on April 11, 1962, which he opened with the following commentary regarding the hike in steel prices. Read Kennedy's remarks carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze the rhetorical strategies President Kennedy uses to achieve his purpose. Support your analysis with specific references to the text.

Line Simultaneous and identical actions of United
States Steel and other leading steel corporations,
increasing steel prices by some 6 dollars a ton,
5 constitute a wholly unjustifiable and irresponsible
defiance of the public interest.

In this serious hour in our nation's history, when
we are confronted with grave crises in Berlin and
Southeast Asia, when we are devoting our energies
to economic recovery and stability, when we are
10 asking Reservists to leave their homes and families
for months on end, and servicemen to risk their
lives—and four were killed in the last two days in
Viet Nam—and asking union members to hold
down their wage requests, at a time when restraint
15 and sacrifice are being asked of every citizen, the
American people will find it hard, as I do, to accept a
situation in which a tiny handful of steel executives
whose pursuit of private power and profit exceeds
their sense of public responsibility can show such
20 utter contempt for the interests of 185 million
Americans.

If this rise in the cost of steel is imitated by the
rest of the industry, instead of rescinded, it would
increase the cost of homes, autos, appliances, and
25 most other items for every American family. It
would increase the cost of machinery and tools to
every American businessman and farmer. It would
seriously handicap our efforts to prevent an
inflationary spiral from eating up the pensions of our
30 older citizens, and our new gains in purchasing
power.

It would add, Secretary McNamara* informed me
this morning, an estimated one billion dollars to the
cost of our defenses, at a time when every dollar is
35 needed for national security and other purposes. It
would make it more difficult for American goods to
compete in foreign markets, more difficult to
withstand competition from foreign imports, and
thus more difficult to improve our balance of
40 payments position, and stem the flow of gold.

And it is necessary to stem it for our national
security, if we are going to pay for our security
commitments abroad. And it would surely handicap
our efforts to induce other industries and unions to
45 adopt responsible price and wage policies.

The facts of the matter are that there is no
justification for an increase in the steel prices. The
recent settlement between the industry and the union,
which does not even take place until July 1st, was
50 widely acknowledged to be non-inflationary, and the
whole purpose and effect of this Administration's
role, which both parties understood, was to achieve
an agreement which would make unnecessary any
increase in prices.

55 Steel output per man is rising so fast that labor
costs per ton of steel can actually be expected to
decline in the next twelve months. And in fact, the
Acting Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor
Statistics informed me this morning that, and I quote:
60 "Employment costs per unit of steel output in 1961
were essentially the same as they were in 1958."

The cost of the major raw materials, steel scrap
and coal, has also been declining, and for an industry
which has been generally operating at less than two-
65 thirds of capacity, its profit rate has been normal and
can be expected to rise sharply this year in view of
the reduction in idle capacity. Their lot has been
easier than that of a hundred thousand steel workers
thrown out of work in the last three years. The
70 industry's cash dividends have exceeded 600 million
dollars in each of the last five years, and earnings in
the first quarter of this year were estimated in the
February 28th Wall Street Journal to be among the
highest in history.

75 In short, at a time when they could be exploring
how more efficiency and better prices could be
obtained, reducing prices in this industry in
recognition of lower costs, their unusually good
labor contract, their foreign competition and their
80 increase in production and profits which are coming

this year, a few gigantic corporations have decided to increase prices in ruthless disregard of their public responsibilities.

85 The Steel Workers Union can be proud that it abided by its responsibilities in this agreement, and this government also has responsibilities, which we intend to meet.

90 The Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission are examining the significance of this action in a free, competitive economy.

95 The Department of Defense and other agencies are reviewing its impact on their policies of procurement, and I am informed that steps are underway by those Members of the Congress who plan appropriate inquiries into how these price

decisions are so quickly made, and reached, and what legislative safeguards may be needed to protect the public interest.

100 Price and wage decisions in this country, except for very limited restrictions in the case of monopolies and national emergency strikes, are and ought to be freely and privately made, but the American people have a right to expect in return for that freedom, a higher sense of business responsibility for the welfare of their country than
105 has been shown in the last two days.

Some time ago I asked each American to consider what he would do for his country and I asked the steel companies. In the last 24 hours we had their
110 answer.

* Robert S. McNamara, secretary of defense from 1961 to 1968

Question 3

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

Consider the distinct perspectives expressed in the following statements.

If you develop the absolute sense of certainty that powerful beliefs provide, then you can get yourself to accomplish virtually anything, including those things that other people are certain are impossible.

William Lyon Phelps, American educator, journalist, and professor (1865–1943)

I think we ought always to entertain our opinions with some measure of doubt. I shouldn't wish people dogmatically to believe any philosophy, not even mine.

Bertrand Russell, British author, mathematician, and philosopher (1872–1970)

In a well-organized essay, take a position on the relationship between certainty and doubt. Support your argument with appropriate evidence and examples.

STOP

END OF EXAM

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Question 2

The score should reflect a judgment of 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 the holistic evaluation of an essay's overall quality. In no case may an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics be scored higher than a 2.

- 9** Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for a 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 President Kennedy uses to achieve his purpose. 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 a 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 President Kennedy uses to achieve his purpose. 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 President Kennedy uses to achieve his purpose. 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 student's ideas.

4 Inadequate

Essays earning a score of 4 **inadequately** analyze the rhetorical strategies President Kennedy uses to achieve his purpose. These essays may misunderstand the passage, misrepresent the strategies Kennedy uses, or may analyze these strategies insufficiently. The evidence or explanations used may be inappropriate, insufficient, or less convincing. The prose generally conveys the student's ideas but may be less consistent in controlling the elements of effective writing.

* For the purposes of scoring, *analysis* refers to identifying features of a text and explaining how the author uses these to develop meaning or to achieve a particular effect or purpose.

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Question 2 (continued)

- 3** Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4 but demonstrate less success in analyzing the rhetorical strategies President Kennedy uses to achieve his purpose. They are less perceptive in their understanding of the passage or Kennedy's strategies, or the explanations or examples may be particularly limited or simplistic. The essays may show less maturity in control of writing.

2 Little Success

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in analyzing the rhetorical strategies President Kennedy uses to achieve his purpose. These essays may misunderstand the prompt, misread the passage, fail to analyze the strategies Kennedy 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 a 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.