

## 2015 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

### Question 2

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

On the tenth anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., labor union organizer and civil rights leader Cesar Chavez published an article in the magazine of a religious organization devoted to helping those in need. Read the following excerpt from the article carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze the rhetorical choices Chavez makes to develop his argument about nonviolent resistance.

Dr. King's entire life was an example of power that nonviolence brings to bear in the real world. It is an example that inspired much of the philosophy and strategy of the farm workers' movement. This Line 5 observance of Dr. King's death gives us the best possible opportunity to recall the principles with which our struggle has grown and matured.

Our conviction is that human life is a very special possession given by God to man and that no one has the right to take it for any reason or for any cause, however just it may be.

10 We are also convinced that nonviolence is more powerful than violence. Nonviolence supports you if you have a just and moral cause. Nonviolence 15 provides the opportunity to stay on the offensive, and that is of crucial importance to win any contest.

If we resort to violence then one of two things will happen: either the violence will be escalated and there 20 will be many injuries and perhaps deaths on both sides, or there will be total demoralization of the workers.

Nonviolence has exactly the opposite effect. If, for 25 every violent act committed against us, we respond with nonviolence, we attract people's support. We can gather the support of millions who have a conscience and would rather see a nonviolent resolution to problems. We are convinced that when people are faced with a direct appeal from the poor struggling 30 nonviolently against great odds, they will react positively. The American people and people everywhere still yearn for justice. It is to that yearning that we appeal.

But if we are committed to nonviolence only as a 35 strategy or tactic, then if it fails our only alternative is to turn to violence. So we must balance the strategy with a clear understanding of what we are doing. However important the struggle is and however much misery, poverty and exploitation exist, we know that it cannot be more important than one human life. We 40 work on the theory that men and women who are truly concerned about people are nonviolent by nature. These people become violent when the deep concern they have for people is frustrated and when they are faced with seemingly insurmountable odds.

45 We advocate militant nonviolence as our means of achieving justice for our people, but we are not blind to the feelings of frustration, impatience and anger

which seethe inside every farm worker. The burdens of generations of poverty and powerlessness lie heavy 50 in the fields of America. If we fail, there are those who will see violence as the shortcut to change.

It is precisely to overcome these frustrations that we have involved masses of people in their own struggle throughout the movement. Freedom is 55 best experienced through participation and self-determination, and free men and women instinctively prefer democratic change to any other means.

Thus, demonstrations and marches, strikes and boycotts are not only weapons against the growers, 60 but our way of avoiding the senseless violence that brings no honor to any class or community. The boycott, as Gandhi taught, is the most nearly perfect instrument of nonviolent change, allowing masses of people to participate actively in a cause.

65 When victory comes through violence, it is a victory with strings attached. If we beat the growers at the expense of violence, victory would come at the expense of injury and perhaps death. Such a thing would have a tremendous impact on us. We would 70 lose regard for human beings. Then the struggle would become a mechanical thing. When you lose your sense of life and justice, you lose your strength.

The greater the oppression, the more leverage 75 nonviolence holds. Violence does not work in the long run and if it is temporarily successful, it replaces one violent form of power with another just as violent. People suffer from violence.

Examine history. Who gets killed in the case of violent revolution? The poor, the workers. The people 80 of the land are the ones who give their bodies and don't really gain that much for it. We believe it is too big a price to pay for not getting anything. Those who espouse violence exploit people. To call men to arms with many promises, to ask them to give up their lives 85 for a cause and then not produce for them afterwards, is the most vicious type of oppression.

We know that most likely we are not going to do anything else the rest of our lives except build our union. For us there is nowhere else to go. Although 90 we would like to see victory come soon, we are willing to wait. In this sense, time is our ally. We learned many years ago that the rich may have money, but the poor have time.

## **2015 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

### **Question 3**

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

An anthropologist studying first-year students at a university in the United States writes that friendly phrases like “How are you?,” “Nice to meet you,” and “Let’s get in touch” communicate politeness rather than literal intent. What, if anything, is the value or function of such polite speech?

In a well-written essay, develop your position on the value or function of polite speech in a culture or community with which you are familiar. Use appropriate evidence from your reading, experience, or observations to support your argument.

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

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# **AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION 2015 SCORING GUIDELINES**

## **Question 2**

The essay's 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 your holistic evaluation of an essay's overall quality. In no case should you give a score higher than a 2 to a paper with errors in grammar and mechanics that persistently interfere with your understanding of meaning.

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**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 choices Chavez makes to develop his argument about nonviolent resistance. 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 choices Chavez makes to develop his argument about nonviolent resistance. 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 choices Chavez makes to develop his argument about nonviolent resistance. 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 choices Chavez makes to develop his argument about nonviolent resistance. The student may misunderstand the passage, misrepresent the strategies Chavez uses, or 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.

# **AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION 2015 SCORING GUIDELINES**

## **Question 2 (continued)**

**3 –** Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for the score of 4 but demonstrate less success in analyzing the rhetorical choices Chavez makes to develop his argument about nonviolent resistance. They are less perceptive in their understanding of the passage or Chavez’s strategies, or the explanations or examples may be particularly limited or simplistic. The essays may show less maturity in their control of writing.

### **2 – Little Success**

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in analyzing the rhetorical choices Chavez makes to develop his argument about nonviolent resistance. The student may misunderstand the prompt, misread the passage, fail to analyze the strategies Chavez 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.