

Question 2

Suggested time—40 minutes

(This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

Reshma Saujani is an attorney, author, and activist who founded Girls Who Code, an organization that works to advance opportunities for girls and women to find careers in the technology sector. The following passage is excerpted from Saujani’s contribution to *American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures*, a 2018 anthology of essays by prominent Americans with backgrounds in multiple cultures. The excerpt begins after Saujani discusses founding a multicultural student organization at her high school. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Saujani makes to convey her message about the nature of bravery.

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 evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Line Years later, when I ran for political office for the
first time, I was exercising my bravery again. I had
enjoyed several years of a lucrative career at a Wall
Street law firm but longed to make my life more about
5 helping to build communities and improving the
future of this country. I wanted to push myself. And
much like barging into Schaumburg High to start a
diversity club, the idea of running for public office felt
good—like I was flexing that bravery muscle again.
10 So I bravely quit my job. I bravely ran for Congress.
And I bravely lost by a landslide.

But I did it authentically, as myself, as *Reshma*. In
the early stages of campaigning, I was told to change
my name to Rita, given the advice that people are
15 more likely to vote for you if they can pronounce your
name. But my bravery had brought me this far. I
wasn’t going to stop now. I could never turn my back
on Reshma to become a Key-Chain Rita.¹ And losing
authentically allowed me to articulate something I
20 was passionate about. I wanted to find a way to
address the fact that American girls are often raised to
value perfection over bravery. They want to be Sweet
Valley Jessicas² instead of Schaumburg³ Reshmas. So
I ran my campaign on a platform of bringing
25 computer science into every classroom and making
sure girls were given equal access to learning coding.
I focused on this because the process of learning to

code—building something from the ground up, using
trial and error, failing and starting over—allows you
30 to see for yourself that perfection is pretty pointless.
And bravery leads to wonderful things.

I should know. After the election loss, I had the gall
to start a national nonprofit called Girls Who Code,
and I don’t even know how to code, myself.

35 But thanks to my childhood, growing up with two
very brave immigrants as parents—who just like me
were children of immigrants in Uganda—I now know
it is more important than ever to be brave and proud
of my identity, to own my role in changing the world,
40 one election loss at a time.

Yes, I did run for office again a few years later. And
yes, I lost again. But bravery is contagious.

On election day, I was running around in the rain
shaking voters’ hands up to the very last minute. I met
45 a woman—I did not catch her name—who was
rushing to the polls. As she passed by me, I smiled
and said, “Who are you voting for today?”

She hesitated, flustered but kind. Embarrassed she
couldn’t pronounce it correctly, she fumbled out an
50 *uhh* as she frantically pulled one of my fliers from her
bag.

“This woman,” she said as she pointed at my name
on the piece of paper.

Even though she needed a cheat sheet to remember

Question 3

Suggested time—40 minutes

(This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In a 2013 *New York Times* article on the practice of taking selfies, writer, editor, and podcast host J Wortham wrote: “Rather than dismissing the trend as a side effect of digital culture or a sad form of exhibitionism,¹ maybe we’re better off seeing selfies for what they are at their best—a kind of visual diary, a way to mark our short existence and hold it up to others as proof that we were here.”

Write an essay that argues your position on the extent to which Wortham’s claim about the value of documenting one’s life with selfies is valid.

¹ behavior that is meant to attract attention to oneself

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.

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

Rhetorical Analysis**6 points**

Reshma Saujani is an attorney, author, and activist who founded Girls Who Code, an organization that works to advance opportunities for girls and women to find careers in the technology sector. The following passage is excerpted from Saujani's contribution to *American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures*, a 2018 anthology of essays by prominent Americans with backgrounds in multiple cultures. The excerpt begins after Saujani discusses founding a multicultural student organization at her high school. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Saujani makes to convey her message about the nature of bravery.

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 evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0–1 points)	0 points For any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no defensible thesis. The intended thesis only restates the prompt. The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt. 	1 point Responds to the prompt with a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only restate the prompt. Fail to address the rhetorical choices the writer of the passage makes. Describe or repeat the passage rather than making a claim that requires a defense. 	Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt <u>and</u> clearly articulate a defensible thesis about the rhetorical choices Saujani makes to convey her message about the nature of bravery.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Reshma Saujani, who founded the organization Girls Who Code, wrote about bravery in the anthology <i>American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures</i>.” Make a claim but do not address the writer’s rhetorical choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “In her essay, Saujani talks about her parents’ bravery after they immigrated to the United States.” Repeat provided information from the passage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Saujani’s parents chose to Americanize their names in order to assimilate into American culture, thereby paving the way for their daughter’s authenticity.” 	Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Reshma Saujani uses comparison and contrast, repetition, and evocative imagery to convey what bravery means to her.” “In her essay, Saujani repeats key words and sentence structures to highlight the link between her parents’ choices and those she has made in her career as a politician and non-profit leader.” “In Reshma’s passage she conveys the message that it is better to be brave and take chances even if you fail, so you can stand apart from the crowd and make a change instead of blending in. Saujani is able to convey this message by first describing a time where she was brave but suffered failures and secondly demonstrating how the failures did not set her back from achieving great things.”
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. The thesis may be anywhere within the response. For a thesis to be defensible, the passage must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn’t do so to earn the thesis point. A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning. 		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how at least one rhetorical choice in the passage contributes to the writer’s argument, purpose, or message.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how multiple rhetorical choices in the passage contribute to the writer’s argument, purpose, or message.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant. 	Typical responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tend to focus on summary or description of a passage rather than specific details or techniques. Mention rhetorical choices with little or no explanation. 	Typical responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument. May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established. 	Typical responses that earn 3 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an argument. Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim. 	Typical responses that earn 4 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an argument. Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. Explain how the writer’s use of rhetorical choices contributes to the student’s interpretation of the passage.
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same rhetorical choice if each instance further contributes to the argument, purpose, or message of the passage. 					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0–1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempt to contextualize the text, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”). Only hint at or suggest other arguments (“<i>While some may argue that...</i>” OR “<i>Some people say...</i>”). Examine individual rhetorical choices but do not examine the relationships among different choices throughout the text. Oversimplify complexities in the text. Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance their analysis. 	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explaining the significance or relevance of the writer’s rhetorical choices (given the rhetorical situation). Explaining a purpose or function of the passage’s complexities or tensions. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference. 	