
AP[®] English Language and Composition

Rhetorical Analysis Prompt - Johnson

On April 9, 1964, Claudia “Lady Bird” Johnson, who was at the time the First Lady of the United States, gave the following speech at the first anniversary luncheon of the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation. The foundation is a nonprofit division of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library dedicated to the works of former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who passed away in 1962. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Johnson makes to achieve her purpose of paying tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt.

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.

For me, it is a great privilege to come here today and participate in this anniversary occasion.

I met Eleanor Roosevelt first in print and admired her. I met her later in person and loved her. As she did to many very young and very timid Congressional wives, she extended her hand and hospitality to me . . . and Washington was warmer.

I saw her last when she came to my home on February 12, 1962, the day the Commission on the Status of Women¹ was organized under her chairmanship and her inspiration. She was 78. I have often thought how much she made those years count for her country.

Nobody, said Marcus Aurelius,² is either the better or the worse for being praised. We are engaged in an idle ceremony, which would have brought no comfort to Eleanor Roosevelt, if we come here merely to praise her great qualities and achievements. She does not need our praise.

All of us are familiar with people who are the partisans of departed virtue, but are afraid to defend an unpopular truth today. Mrs. Roosevelt never stood with this timid company. Her conscience was her counselor, and she followed its commands with unfaltering courage. Nor did she really understand what people meant when they praised her for taking so many risks. She would have taken the greatest risk of all if she had remained silent in the presence of wrong. She would have risked the integrity of her soul.

A rabbi of the Jewish community in Berlin under the Hitler regime once said: “The most important thing I learned is that bigotry and hatred are not the most urgent problems. The most urgent, the most disgraceful, the most shameful, and the most tragic problem—is silence.”

Eleanor Roosevelt taught us that sometimes silence is the greatest sin.

Do you remember what Dr. Samuel Johnson³ said about courage? “Unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other.” Mrs. Roosevelt knew what those words meant. She lived their meaning every day of her life. Courage sustained by compassion—that was the watchword of her entire career.

Always she thought not of abstract rights, but of living wrongs.

I watched her at close range one day when she spent two hours helping the 75th Congressional Club give a benefit luncheon to buy a wheelchair for a crippled boy.

Only one person was involved. Where else do you start, but with one person?

She thought of the suffering individual, not of a theoretical principle. She saw an unemployed father, and so she helped him. She saw a neglected Negro child, and so she educated him. She saw dictators hurling the world into war, and so she worked unflinchingly for peace. She saw the United Nations divided by the conflict of ideology and power, and so she became the prophet of the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights.⁴ Are we ready to fight similar battles against new foes in our own day? If not, our grief is an empty thing, and the spirit of Eleanor Roosevelt is not among us.

President Wilson used to say that some people in Washington grow in office, while others merely swell. Mrs. Roosevelt steadily grew under the compulsions and inspirations of her great office. But, it is perhaps the ultimate tribute to Mrs. Roosevelt that she reached true greatness after the shock of her bereavement when she went bravely forward in a new career as a spokesman for America and a servant of world peace. In the White House she was the First Lady in the land, but after the White House she became, as Ambassador Stevenson⁵ has reminded us, the First Lady in the world. Great was her goodness, and it was her goodness that made her so great.

Let us today earnestly resolve to build the true foundation for Eleanor Roosevelt's memory—to pluck out prejudice from our lives, to remove fear and hate where it exists, and to create a world unafraid to work out its destiny in peace. Eleanor Roosevelt has already made her own splendid and incomparable contribution to that foundation. Let us go and do likewise, within the measure of our faith and the limits of our ability. Let Eleanor Roosevelt teach us all how to turn the arts of compassion into the victories of democracy.

¹ United States governmental body established by President John F. Kennedy to promote fair treatment for women, particularly in the workplace

² Roman emperor from 161 to 180 CE

³ eighteenth-century English writer

⁴ Roosevelt was a delegate to the United Nations General Assembly from 1945 to 1952, and in that role, played a key part in drafting the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

⁵ Adlai Stevenson II, an American politician who was at the time the United States Ambassador to the United Nations

AP[®] English Language and Composition

Scoring Guidelines

Rhetorical Analysis - Johnson

Rhetorical Analysis

6 points

On April 9, 1964, Claudia “Lady Bird” Johnson, who was at the time the First Lady of the United States, gave the following speech at the first anniversary luncheon of the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation. The foundation is a nonprofit division of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library dedicated to the works of former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who passed away in 1962. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Johnson makes to achieve her purpose of paying tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt.

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.

AP English Language and Composition 2020 Scoring Guidelines

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 restate or rephrase the prompt <u>and</u> clearly articulate a defensible thesis about the rhetorical choices Johnson makes to achieve her purpose of paying tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"Johnson uses rhetorical choices to achieve her purpose of paying tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt."</i> Make a claim but do not address the writer's rhetorical choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"Johnson praises Eleanor Roosevelt, stating that the First Lady was kind and more importantly that she represented American ideals to the world."</i> Repeat provided information from the passage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"Johnson pays tribute to Roosevelt by saying that 'it was her goodness that made her so great.'"</i> 	Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer's rhetorical choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"Johnson lists important examples from Eleanor Roosevelt's work with others to pay tribute to her life."</i> <i>"In her speech given at the first anniversary luncheon of the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation, Claudia Johnson uses rhetorical questions, aphorisms, and her arrangement of sentences to effectively pay tribute to the former First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt."</i> <i>"In her address to the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation on the occasion of its first anniversary luncheon, Claudia 'Lady Bird' Johnson presents inspiring words, arguing that Eleanor Roosevelt's greatest strength was in refusing to remain silent when faced with injustice. To make this point, John appeals to the audience's emotion, provides proof of Roosevelt's effect on the international community, and looks to other great figures whose words aligned with Roosevelt's."</i>
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. 		

AP English Language and Composition 2020 Scoring Guidelines

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. 				

AP English Language and Composition 2020 Scoring Guidelines

	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 the 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 argument, not merely a phrase or reference. 	

AP[®] English Language and Composition

Sample Student Responses - Packet 1

Rhetorical Analysis Question - Johnson

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Sample A

[1] To this very day, hate surrounds us. It was no different in the twentieth century, with segregation and rampant wars prevalent. Citizens of all nations were being left behind in rubble and despair, while others turned their back on the commitments they had made to the world around them. However, a beacon of hope was found in America, lit by the contributions of Eleanor Roosevelt. This is why Claudia Johnson, a fellow First Lady herself, uses her prowess as a political figure to emphasize the contributions of Eleanor Roosevelt through alluding to great quotes she felt embodied the spirit of Eleanor Roosevelt and by utilizing her perspective of having known Eleanor personally and admiring her to encourage women to act in similar ways of Eleanor Roosevelt.

[2] Claudia Johnson integrates quotes into her writing that illuminates the kind of person Eleanor Roosevelt was. Knowing that Eleanor Roosevelt was outspoken about issues that many others stayed silent about, she utilizes a quote from a member of the Jewish community under the Hitler regime to establish a contrast: “The most urgent, the most disgraceful, the most shameful, and the most tragic problem- is silence,” Johnson echoes, arguing that Roosevelt was far from silent on the issues she cared about, such as the treatment of African Americans and the underprivileged in society (Johnson). By alluding to this quote in her speech, Johnson is successful in eliciting a fire within her audience that encourages them to use their credibility as women in the political sphere to do good like Eleanor Roosevelt once did. Claudia Johnson wants her audience to be the next generation of Eleanor Roosevelt’s so that they can accomplish more in Eleanor Roosevelt’s memory than could have ever been dreamt of. By appealing to a passion in her audience and ultimately eliciting vibrant emotions, she encourages her audience to pursue tasks that make them feel as hard-working and as excited about the work they do as Eleanor Roosevelt felt about her work.

[3] This great speaker does not simply make assumptions about Eleanor Roosevelt, instead, she uses her background as someone who had been involved in the political sphere to elaborate on how unique Eleanor Roosevelt was. By warmly stating that Eleanor “extended her hand and hospitality to me”, she truly exemplifies why Eleanor Roosevelt was such a significant political figure during this time period (Johnson). She used her charm to extend her sphere of influence, enough to the point where she was later referred to as the “First Lady in the world” (Johnson). Eleanor Roosevelt did not shy away with all of this power, instead she harnessed it to create a better life for others. By Claudia Johnson showing how Eleanor Roosevelt did this not only in the public’s eye but also in her personal life, she demonstrates to her audience that the kind of person Eleanor was is rare and is a character trait that should be desired by fellow women in the political sphere: to not shy away from conflict but instead intervene and diffuse it, even if it’s not observed as a woman’s place. By eliciting a feeling of desire to achieve in her audience, Claudia Johnson continues to encourage women to pursue the same actions that Eleanor Roosevelt once took and to make legitimate change in the world that betters the lives of others. Not only that, having established a line of credibility due to having known Eleanor Roosevelt, Johnson leaves her audience feeling like they have been exposed to the great truths about Eleanor

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Roosevelt and her success. This leaves her audience wanting to succeed in the ways that Roosevelt once did.

[4] Claudia Johnson was especially skilled in encouraging her audience of primarily women to escape the private sphere and use their knowledge and political positions to actually change the world, like Eleanor Roosevelt did. Johnson argues that Eleanor Roosevelt wouldn't want her accomplishments praised in a way that did not acknowledge how they had once been condemned. Speaking out against unjust practices is not easy, and it's especially not easy for women. This is why Claudia Johnson uses her credibility of having been involved in the political sphere for an extended amount of time as well as utilizing her ability to elicit passion in her audience to encourage them to actually make strides in the world that surrounds them. She knows that Eleanor Roosevelt's work is not done and she needs to encourage the next generation of outspoken and disobedient women. She is very effective in doing so by alluding to texts that criticize actions such as silence as well as using her perspective as a woman in power who has been exposed to the political sphere, encouraging women across the world to act.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Sample B

[1] On April 9, 1964, United States First Lady Claudia Johnson gave a speech in honor of Eleanor Roosevelt. She spoke to those in attendance of the luncheon, specifically talking to the women within the crowd. She spoke about the many great things Roosevelt achieved for the women across America. Johnson goes at great lengths to emphasize just how important a role Roosevelt played in helping the people across the nation. Johnson gives this speech to light a fire inside her audience, hoping to motivate them into taking action and fighting for what they believe in. In order to achieve this, Johnson uses multiple rhetorical choices that better her argument and make it more convincing. In Claudia Johnson's speech at the first anniversary luncheon of the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation, Johnson uses ethos, exemplification, and rhetorical questions to motivate her audience to make a change in the world, proving that anybody is capable of making a difference.

[2] The first rhetorical appeal Johnson uses in her speech is ethos. She uses ethos in order to give credibility for her argument. Johnson first uses this, saying: "Nobody, said Marcus Aurelius, is either better or worse for being praised... She does not need our praise" (Johnson). This quote achieves multiple things. First, by citing a famous leader in world history, Johnson instantly gains credibility. This quote also redirects her audience's view on the ceremony, showing how Johnson's purpose is not to praise Roosevelt. Johnson was not giving a speech in honor of Roosevelt, but instead using Roosevelt as a model example of what everybody in the audience must do. Johnson later uses ethos again, saying: "A rabbi of the Jewish community in Berlin under the Hitler regime once said: 'The most important thing I learned is that bigotry and hatred are not the most urgent problems... the most shameful, the most tragic problem – is silence'" (Johnson). In this quote, she cites somebody who led a group of Jewish people right under Hitler's nose. She shows how anybody is capable of making a difference in the world no matter the situation. If a rabbi can lead a Jewish community in Hitler occupied Berlin, anybody is capable of doing what they want in their lives. This rabbi was not super famous or well known, yet still was able to make a significant change and do what he believed was right.

[3] Johnson uses exemplification to show the audience just how many great things Roosevelt achieved during her lifetime. She first does this, saying: "I watched her at close range one day when she spent two hours helping the 75th Congressional Club give a benefit luncheon to buy a wheelchair for a crippled boy" (Johnson). In this quote, Johnson shows multiple things. First, she shows how Roosevelt was constantly motivated to achieve what she thought was right. By showing this, Johnson hopes to spark a change in the mindset of her audience, hoping that those in attendance will now be more likely to do the same. This quote also shows how Roosevelt was willing to work hard only to help one single person. This shows the audience that making a change can be as little as helping a single person. It does not matter how many people one is helping or how important one's cause may be on the world scale. All that matters is that everybody tries their hardest to achieve what they deem is right. Johnson uses exemplification once again later in the speech, saying: "I saw her last when she

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

came to my home on February 12, 1962, the day the Commission on the Status of Women was organized under her chairmanship and her inspiration. She was 78" (Johnson). This quote once again highlights Roosevelt's constant determination to make a change. Johnson purposefully notes Roosevelt's age at this point in time to show the audience that truly anybody can make a change in the world. If a 78 year old woman can create a whole commission fighting for gender equality across a nation, the members of the audience can too make a change.

[4] The last rhetorical strategy that Johnson uses in her speech is rhetorical questions. Johnson uses these questions to direct her argument at the audience, making sure they truly know who she is speaking to. The first example of this is evident when she says, "Only one person as involved. Where else do you start, but with one person?" (Johnson). This question highlights how it does not matter how many people are being helped. This quote makes Johnson's goal more approachable for her audience members as many lack the resources to make a large change in the world. Many might feel overwhelmed if Johnson were to discuss people making huge changes that impacted entire nations. Instead, she purposefully discusses Roosevelt helping individual people so that members of her audience feel like they too can do what Roosevelt did. This quote shows the audience members that it is important to help anybody in any way that one can. Johnson uses another rhetorical question later in the speech, saying, "Are we ready to fight similar battles against new foes in our own day?" (Johnson). This quote makes the people in attendance of the luncheon know for sure who the intended audience is. Johnson makes sure to use first person pronouns so that the audience feels as if they have the same level of importance as she does. Johnson wants her audience members to believe that they are just as capable as she is to enact change and promote what they believe is right.

[5] Johnson uses ethos, exemplification, and rhetorical questions in her speech at the first anniversary luncheon of the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation to motivate her audience to make a change in the world, proving that anybody is capable of making a difference. She uses ethos in her argument to give it credibility and show other famous leaders who fought for what they believe in. She exemplifies multiple of Roosevelt's actions, big and small, showing that Roosevelt was constantly motivated to fight for what she believes in no matter the relative importance of the cause. Lastly, Johnson uses rhetorical questions to direct her argument at those listening to her, making sure they do not mistake who the target audience is. By using these rhetorical strategies, Johnson effectively creates a well built argument that will motivate her audience members to enact change in their lives. In the end, it does not matter how big or small one's cause may be. It does not matter how famous or unknown those fighting for their cause may be. All that matters is that when one sees something wrong in their lives, they work tirelessly to fix that problem and do not stop until they achieve their goal.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Sample C

[1] Alongside the amazing president Franklin D. Roosevelt was an amazing First Lady: Eleanor Roosevelt. She was called his eyes and ears when he fell sick, she was a dedicated giver, and most of all, she lived out her every given word in her day to day life, accomplishing incredible feats just as she would say she would. She worked for everyone of all races and genders, and would become one of the greatest role models in the world; not only for women, but for everyone. Claudia "Lady Bird" Johnson, First Lady at the time, had the honor of giving a speech at the first anniversary luncheon at her memorial. In this speech, she exemplified the many accomplishments of Eleanor Roosevelt, and described the kindness she always showed in order to pay a respectful and adequate tribute to the world's First Lady.

[2] Given the time period of 1960's America, women were still stuck in many gender roles, and it was uncommon to see women achieving high statuses and fighting for causes on their own. For this reason, Johnson's choice to list her many successes and achievements paid great homage to Eleanor Roosevelt. She mentions her work in UN and her organization of The Commission on the Status of Women, but it is most apparent in paragraph 13 that Johnson wanted to emphasize the point that Mrs. Roosevelt went beyond any normal position someone could achieve, quoting Ambassador Stevenson that she was "First Lady of the World". This is not a job that literally exists. However, this title was coined for her due to her immense work for human rights and poverty all around the world. Therefore, my alluding to this title given by Ambassador Steven, Claudia Johnson is proving to the crowd that her work did not even fit into one job: she worked for the whole world. Alongside knowing her many career successes, knowing that being a woman, on her own, worked on the international scale as an activist for human rights was more than enough to impress any spectator at the memorial, and earn the respect of any listener. Claudia Johnson's exemplification of Roosevelt's success legitimized her, and earned the audience's credibility.

[3] In addition to listing her many successes and her title, Johnson included the point repeatedly that above all else, Eleanor Roosevelt had a good heart. In order to show that her morals and heart transcended any title she could have, Johnson explained what Eleanor taught with her principles, and called upon her listeners to act as she would. First, in paragraph 12, she elaborates upon her kindness by suggesting that Roosevelt's focus was not on an overarching cause, but rather, helping individuals in any way she could, such as "an unemployed father, or a neglected [african american] child". This elicited emotion from the audience, knowing that she cared for individuals who are so oppressed in their time, and warmed their heart to see someone so high up helping people so low. This pays great homage as well, by surviving her kindness by retelling. This concept is further reiterated by her call to action for the audience. In the conclusion, by urging the audience to "pluck prejudice from [their] lives, to remove fear and hate where it exists, and to create a world unafraid to work out its destiny in peace ", she is living on Mrs.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Roosevelt. She is preaching her same principles, and citing them to Mrs. Roosevelt. In doing this, Johnson is giving the crowd a powerful message, and knowing that it comes from Eleanor Roosevelt, she urges the audience to have a new respect for her; successfully paying tribute to the First Lady of the World.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Sample D

[1] Eleanor Roosevelt was an inspiration. She was seen as a ray of hope during the Great Depression, during which she was the First Lady. Her humanitarian work and dedication to helping the people of the United States is what made her a notable First Lady. Her love and commitment to her nation and to the people of the nation during an economic crisis is what has solidified her standing as one of the most well known First Ladies. As former First Lady Claudia Johnson recounts in her speech, honoring former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, she recounts all the amazing qualities of the first lady that she admires. In her speech given at the first anniversary luncheon of the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation, Claudia Johnson uses rhetorical questions, aphorisms, and her arrangement of sentences to effectively pay tribute to the former First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt.

[2] Claudia Johnson's use rhetorical questions grabs the audience's attention to the outstanding qualities of Eleanor Roosevelt, which Johnson wants to emphasize. Johnson uses rhetorical questions to highlight the greatness of the deeds done by the former First Lady. Such as when she said "Only one person . . . but with one person?". This rhetorical question shows readers that Eleanor Roosevelt wasn't afraid to stand on her own. Johnson wants to inspire the crowd and by showing them Roosevelt's fearlessness, she hopes to make them understand that if one person stands up and fights for the right thing, that is all that is needed. This rhetorical questions helps establish Eleanor Roosevelt's character and that she wasn't afraid to stand by herself and help someone in need. Another rhetorical question is when she says "Are we ready to . . .". This question helps establish the lasting effect of Roosevelt's legacy. This question is meant to grip the audience and make them aware that with Roosevelt gone, it is up to them to continue to fight the way she did. BY doing this, Johnson effectively manages to include the audience in her praise of the Roosevelt and establishes a direct connection between them. The direct connection helps further her purpose of paying tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt because getting others involved in this movement to help the rest of the world, is what Roosevelt stood for, and it would be the best way to honor her memory.

[3] Johnson's use of aphorisms helps her pay tribute to the virtues of Eleanor Roosevelt and effectively honor her memory. One aphorism was when Johnson said ". . . sometimes silence is the greatest sin." This saying is a common saying and by relating it to Roosevelt, it shows her qualities that attracted people to her. Her fearlessness in the face of adversity and standing up for those who can't shows what kind of person she is. This aphorism effectively honors her and the lasting impact she had on Johnson. The aphorisms highlights one of the many lessons Johnson learned from Roosevelt which helps to overall drive her point in honoring the deceased first lady. Another aphorism is in

[4] Johnson's arrangement of sentences is another way in which she effectively pays tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt. Johnson's syntax in her paragraphs is arranged in a format of stating a general truth

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

and bringing it back to Roosevelt. For example, when Johnson says, "All of us are familiar . . . Mrs. Roosevelt never stood with. . ." , she shows how different Eleanor was from the masses. The arrangement of her sentences so as to show Eleanor did not fit into the societal generalizations, shows off the qualities of Eleanor that made her an amazing First lady and an amazing ambassador afterwards. Another example is when she says "President Wilson used to say . . . Mrs. Roosevelt steadily . . .". This arrangement of sentences in this paragraph is to show how Roosevelt blossomed under pressure. She was put in the public eye and she blossomed and became a ray of hope for the entire nation during dark times. The author arranges her statements so that they have the maximum impact on her audience. Starting with general statements or quotes as she does in these two examples, allows her to set up the context and show how Roosevelt either embodies the statement or defies it. Both of which help establish Roosevelt's character.

[5] Overall, Johnson was very effective in paying tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt. Her use of rhetorical questions, aphorisms, and syntax helps the audience see the amazing qualities that Roosevelt embodied. She praises Roosevelt appropriately and thus effectively pays tribute to the former first lady.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Sample E

[1] On April 9, 1964, Claudia Jhonson who was currently the First Lady of the United States gave a phenomenal speech at the first anniversary luncheon of Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation. Throughout her speech she glorifies Eleanor Roosevelt's actions and upholds her beliefs describing the enormous impact she had on millions of peoples lives. Claudia uses rhetorical strategies alliteration, hypophora, and amplification in her speech to leave a lasting and meaningful impression on everyone who heard it.

[2] Firstly, Claudia uses the rhetorical strategy alliteration throughout her speech such as when she states, "Her conscience was her councillor." She says this while describing how Eleanor Roosevelt is not afraid to stand up for what she believes in and will always try to help other people no matter the odds. With Claudias use of alliteration it affects the audience by both causing that phrase to resonate in their heads making her speech more meaningful and it furthermore, creates and gives the audience an idea of how unwavering her conscience makes her speech more memorable.

[3] Secondly, Claudia implements the use of the rhetorical strategy hypophora within her speech. This is evident when she states, "Where else do you start, but with one person?" Her use of hypophora causes the audience to look at themselves and to question how they view what she is saying. This pushes the audience to reflect on their own beliefs adding a level of depth to her speech as well as to get the audience more involved in what she is saying. This in addition creates an atmosphere of hope and remembrance as she goes on to answer the question causing the audience to feel they can make the world a better place themselves as well.

[4] Lastly, Claudia uses the rhetorical strategy amplification. Her use of amplification is evident in her statements such as "She saw dictators hurling the world into war, and so she worked unflinchingly for peace" and "The most urgent, the most disgraceful, the most shameful, and the most tragic problem- is silence." Her use of amplification during her speech causes the audience to feel the urgency in what she is saying and how important it is to the world. Furthermore, it causes the audience to want to make a change just as Eleanor Roosevelt givin how serious Claudia portrays them to be during her speech.

[5] Claudia's speech will continue to be looked back on for years to come due to her phenomenal use of rhetorical strategies such as alliteration, hypophora, and amplification. She demonstrates how if you can effectively use rhetorical strategies in your own speeches and papers, and how if you implement the most relevant ones to your topic you can leave a lasting positive impression on your audience. Furthermore, she set an example on how with the use of these devices you can help people see from your perspective and get people to make a change in their lives as well.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Sample F

[1] Eleanor Roosevelt was an American advocate. She advocated for a role for women in the workspaces. Claudia Johnson portrays Eleanor Roosevelt tribute by portraying Roosevelt in an uplifting tone/matter and shows that she had the right reasons for her achievements.

[2] Many people heard or may have known Eleanor Roosevelt, this causes many different perspectives to be formed, good or bad. In paragraph 2, Johnson talks about how she came to love Roosevelt and others did also. By doing this she put a picture in the audience's head that Roosevelt was a well liked person but it doesn't portray what people disliked about her. When only talking about the achievements of Roosevelt it only paints a picture for someone to see the good in her. This allows the audience to be more involved in the speech given because the uplifting tone allows them to have their own memories and thoughts of Roosevelt.

[3] Praise can often lead to good things or be followed by bad things. In paragraph 4, Johnson says "she does not need our praise", by stating this it shows the audience that Eleanor Roosevelt didn't work hard just for the praise but for the outcome that followed. It was also stated in paragraph 5 that Roosevelt never stood with "timid company". Timid company is seen as lacking courage. Johnson points these out in her speech to show that even though she received praise for what she did, it wasn't why she did it.

[4] Overall, Claudia Johnson portrayed Roosevelt in a good way that would appeal to her audience. By setting a calm, happy tone her audience would be more into her speech. Claudia Johnson, who was the first lady at the time, wrote her speech in a positive manner. But why didn't she show negative factors of Roosevelt?

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Sample G

[1] In the speech by Claudia Johnson at the first anniversary luncheon of the Eleanor Roosevelt foundation, Johnson uses paradox when she says “She thought of the suffering individual, not the theoretical principle.”

[2] Johnson uses a paradox when she says “She thought of the suffering individual, not the theoretical principle.” because she is trying to explain how Roosevelt was doing things not because it was the right thing to do but because someone needed help. Johnson goes on to give example such as “She saw an unemployed father so she helped him” and “She saw a neglected negro child, so she educated him”. These examples were used to show how if there was someone in need of help she would try to help.

2020

AP[®]

CollegeBoard

AP[®] English Language and Composition

Scoring Commentaries - Packet 1

Rhetorical Analysis Question - Johnson

**AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
2020 Scoring Commentaries**

Index of Scores for Samples

Sample Reference	Row A	Row B	Row C
A	1	4	1
B	1	4	0
C	1	3	1
D	1	3	0
E	1	2	0
F	1	1	0
G	0	1	0

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
2020 Scoring Commentaries

Sample A

Score: 6/6 Points (A1 – B4 – C1)

Row A: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row A because it clearly articulates a defensible thesis at the end of the first paragraph: “This is why Claudia Johnson, a fellow First Lady herself, uses her prowess as a political figure to emphasize the contributions of Eleanor Roosevelt through alluding to great quotes she felt embodied the spirit of Eleanor Roosevelt and by utilizing her perspective of having known Eleanor personally and admiring her to encourage women to act in similar ways of Eleanor Roosevelt.”

Row B: 4/4

The response earned four points for Row B because it successfully integrated specific textual references to support all claims within the student’s argument. Each paragraph begins with a clear claim that explains how Johnson characterizes Roosevelt. The response consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning; for example, the response explains in paragraph two that Johnson’s use of quotations “illuminates the kind of person Eleanor Roosevelt was,” and it is this rhetorical choice that makes Johnson “successful in eliciting a fire within her audience that encourages them to use their credibility as women in the political sphere to do good like Eleanor Roosevelt once did.” The response continues to provide additional evidence in paragraph three, explaining how Roosevelt “created a better life for others” and “did this not only in the public’s eye but also her personal life.” Paragraph three continues to describe how Johnson’s characterization of Eleanor Roosevelt encourages the audience to “make legitimate change in the world that betters the lives of others.” The line of reasoning is clear throughout as the response repeatedly focuses on how Johnson is “encouraging women across the world to act” in her tribute to Roosevelt.

Row C: 1/1

The response earned one point in Row C for a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation in paragraph one, which references “the twentieth century, with segregation and rampant wars prevalent.” This is again obvious in paragraphs three and four with the discussion about Johnson’s credibility and influence as the speaker since she was also a “First Lady” and involved in the “political sphere.”

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
2020 Scoring Commentaries

Sample B

Score: 5/6 Points (A1 – B4 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row A for its thesis at the end of the first paragraph: “In Claudia Johnson’s speech at the first anniversary luncheon of the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation, Johnson uses ethos, exemplification, and rhetorical questions to motivate her audience to make a change in the world, proving that anybody is capable of making a difference.”

Row B: 4/4

The response earned four points for Row B for integrating specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning that examines how Johnson is “using Roosevelt as a model example of what everybody in the audience must do.” Paragraph two examines Johnson’s choice of ethos, specifically through references to “Marcus Aurelius” and the saying from “a rabbi of the Jewish community in Berlin.” The response ties both pieces of evidence to Johnson’s purpose that “anyone is capable of doing what they want in their lives.” Paragraph three explains exemplification and its contribution to Johnson’s purpose with a focus on how Johnson’s use of examples encourages “change in the mindset of her audience” by highlighting “Roosevelt’s constant determination to make a change.” As the response continues, paragraph four examines Johnson’s use of rhetorical questions as a means to make “Johnson’s goal more approachable for her audience members.” The response continues to return to Johnson’s larger purpose of using Roosevelt as an example that the audience is “just as capable as she is to enact change and promote what they believe is right.”

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C. While the response explains Johnson’s rhetorical choices and discusses the purpose of this tribute, it does not demonstrate a complex understanding of the choices in light of the rhetorical situation. There is no discussion of complexities in the passage. Style is appropriate to the task but is not consistently vivid or persuasive.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
2020 Scoring Commentaries

Sample C

Score: 5/6 Points (A1 – B3 – C1)

Row A: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row A for developing a clearly defensible thesis statement in the final sentence of the introductory paragraph: “In this speech, she exemplified the many accomplishments of Eleanor Roosevelt, and described the kindness she always showed in order to pay a respectful and adequate tribute to the world’s First Lady.”

Row B: 3/4

The response earned three points for Row B because it includes textual references relevant to the thesis and explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning. Paragraph two examines Johnson’s “choice to list [Roosevelt’s] many successes and achievements” and explains that “it was uncommon to see women achieving high statuses and fighting for causes on their own.” While most of the evidence in paragraph two is paraphrased, the response does create a line of reasoning, specifically that Johnson’s description of Roosevelt’s “career successes” as well as the “international scale” of her activism was meant to “impress any spectator at the memorial, and earn the response of any listener.” This observation is especially perceptive. Paragraph three, a combined discussion of Roosevelt’s kindness and her call to action, does not integrate all evidence to support the key claims, as commentary lacks development and specificity.

Row C: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row C for sophistication because of an understanding of the complexities of the rhetorical situation. An understanding of the context of the rigidity of gender roles during this time is utilized to an impressive degree in the second paragraph.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
2020 Scoring Commentaries

Sample D

Score: 4/6 Points (A1 – B3 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row A for the clear, defensible thesis at the end of the first paragraph: “In her speech given at the first anniversary luncheon of the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation, Claudia Johnson uses rhetorical questions, aphorisms, and her arrangement of sentences to effectively pay tribute to the former First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt.” The thesis is reiterated in the final paragraph of the response as well.

Row B: 3/4

The response earned three points for Row B because it includes textual references relevant to the thesis and explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning. In paragraph two, the response explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning and contributes to the speaker’s argument through a discussion about Johnson’s use of rhetorical questions: “Johnson effectively manages to include the audience in her praise of the Roosevelt and establishes a direct connection between them. The direct connection helps further her purpose of paying tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt because getting others involved in this movement to help the rest of the world, is what Roosevelt stood for, and it would be the best way to honor her memory.” While paragraph three identifies Johnson’s use of aphorism to “pay tribute to the virtues of Eleanor Roosevelt,” the commentary is simplistic, and the evidence is not clearly explained. Paragraph four examines “Johnson’s arrangement of sentences” and provides some clearer connections to the line of reasoning. By describing Johnson’s sentence organization as means “to show Eleanor did not fit into the societal generalizations” and as an example of how “Roosevelt blossomed under pressure,” the response is able to draw a larger conclusion about Roosevelt’s character.

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C. The response did not demonstrate a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation. There is no attempt to analyze the interaction between Johnson’s rhetorical choices. The ideas are clearly conveyed, but the style is not vivid or persuasive.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
2020 Scoring Commentaries

Sample E

Score: 3/6 Points (A1 – B2 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row A for the defensible thesis found in the last two sentences of the first paragraph: “Throughout her speech she glorifies Eleanor Roosevelt’s actions and upholds her beliefs describing the enormous impact she had on millions of peoples lives. Claudia uses rhetorical strategies alliteration, hypophora, and amplification in her speech to leave a lasting and meaningful impression on everyone who heard it.”

Row B: 2/4

The response earned two points for Row B because it provides some specific, relevant evidence and explains how some of the evidence relates to the thesis. The second paragraph begins with a claim that Johnson “uses the rhetorical strategy alliteration throughout her speech.” While the response argues that “Eleanor Roosevelt is not afraid to stand up for what she believes in,” the response struggles to clearly explain how Johnson’s use of alliteration advances Johnson’s argument about Roosevelt’s character. Paragraph three examines hypophora as a way for Johnson to “cause the audience to look at themselves and to question how they view what she is saying.” However, the link between Johnson’s rhetorical choice and the commentary is simplistic and broad. Paragraph four explains how some of the evidence relates to the argument: “Her use of amplification during her speech causes the audience to feel the urgency in what she is saying and how important it is to the world. Furthermore, it causes the audience to want to make a change just as Eleanor Roosevelt.” However, the line of reasoning is not clearly established. Instead, the response relies upon broad generalizations such as “it causes the audience to want to make a change just as Eleanor Roosevelt.”

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C. While the response refers to broad generalizations about Eleanor Roosevelt’s character, it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or understanding of the rhetorical situation, as evidenced by the final paragraph, which discusses how “you can effectively use rhetorical strategies in your own speeches.” There is no identification or explanation of any complexities or tensions in the passage. And while clear, the response is not consistently vivid or persuasive in style.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
2020 Scoring Commentaries

Sample F

Score: 2/6 Points (A1 – B1 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

The response earned one point for a rather weak, but defensible, thesis statement developed at the end of the first paragraph: “Claudia Johnson portrays Eleanor Roosevelt tribute by portraying Roosevelt in an uplifting tone/matter and shows that she had the right reasons for her achievements.”

Row B: 1/4

The response earned one point for Row B. The second paragraph provides evidence that is mostly general: “Johnson talks about how she came to love Roosevelt and others did also.” The remainder of the paragraph provides generalizations about Johnson’s purpose: “By doing this she put a picture in the audience’s head that Roosevelt was a well liked person but it doesn’t portray what people disliked about her.” Paragraph three refers to the speech specifically several times. However, the attempt at commentary summarizes the evidence: “Johnson says ‘she does not need our praise,’ by stating this it shows the audience that Eleanor Roosevelt didn’t work hard just for the praise but for the outcome that followed.”

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C. It does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or understanding of the rhetorical situation, as evidenced by statements such as, “But why didn’t she show negative factors of Roosevelt?” There is no identification or explanation of any complexities or tensions in the passage. The response is not vivid or persuasive. Ideas are often repetitive.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
2020 Scoring Commentaries

Sample G

Score: 1/6 Points (A0 – B1 – C0)

Row A: 0/1

The response did not earn the point for Row A. The response identifies Johnson’s use of paradox but makes no claim about how this choice advances Johnson’s purpose.

Row B: 1/4

The response earned one point for Row B because it describes rhetorical choices rather than offering any discussion of the effects of these choices in the speech. The response provides an example but offers no explanation: “Johnson uses a paradox when she says ‘She thought of the suffering individual, not the theoretical principle.’ because she is trying to explain how Roosevelt was doing things not because it was the right thing do but because someone needed help.” The attempts at commentary simply restate the cited evidence from the speech: “These examples were used to show if there was someone in need of help she would try to help.”

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C because it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought. The response does not identify or explain any of the complexities or tensions in the passage. The style is not vivid or persuasive.