

2020

AP[®]

 CollegeBoard

AP[®] English Language and Composition

Rhetorical Analysis - Kennedy

The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, dedicated in 1979, was founded in memory of the president and contains archives pertaining to his administration. On June 24, 1985, then President Ronald Reagan joined members of the Kennedy family at a fundraising event to help the Kennedy Library Foundation create an endowment to fund and support the presidential library. The following is an excerpt from the speech Reagan gave at that event. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Reagan makes to achieve his purpose of paying tribute to John F. Kennedy.

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.

I have found myself thinking not so much about the John F. Kennedy Library as about the man himself, and what his life meant to our country and our times, particularly to the history of this century.

It always seemed to me that he was a man of the most interesting contradictions, very American contradictions. We know from his many friends and colleagues—we know in part from the testimony available at the library—that he was self-deprecating yet proud, ironic yet easily moved, highly literary yet utterly at home with the common speech of the ordinary man. He was a writer who could expound with ease on the moral forces that shaped John Calhoun’s political philosophy;¹ on the other hand, he possessed a most delicate and refined appreciation for Boston’s political wards and the characters who inhabited it. He could cuss a blue streak but then, he’d been a sailor.

He loved history and approached it as both romantic and realist. He could quote Stephen Vincent Benet on General Lee’s Army—²

“The aide-de-camp knew certain lines of Greek
And other such unnecessary things
... that are good for peace
But are not deemed so serviceable for war.”

And he could sum up a current statesman with an earthy epithet³ that could leave his audience weak with laughter. One sensed that he loved mankind as it was, in spite of itself, and that he had little patience with those who would perfect what was really not meant to be perfect.

As a leader, as a president, he seemed to have a good, hard, unillusioned understanding of man and his political choices. He had written a book as a very young man about why the world slept as Hitler marched on; and he understood the tension between good and evil in the history of man—understood, indeed, that much of the history of man can be seen in the constant working out of that tension. He knew that the United States had adversaries, real adversaries, and they weren’t about to be put off by soft reason and good intentions. He tried always to be strong with them, and shrewd. He wanted our defense system to be unsurpassed; he cared that his country would be safe.

He was a patriot who summoned patriotism from the heart of a sated country. It is a matter of pride to me that so many men and women who were inspired by his bracing vision and moved by his call to “ask not”⁴ serve now in the White House doing the business of government.

Which is not to say I supported John Kennedy when he ran for president, because I didn’t. I was for the other fellow. But you know, it’s true: when the battle’s over and the ground is cooled, well, it’s then that you see the opposing general’s valor.

He would have understood. He was fiercely, happily partisan, and his political fights were tough—no quarter asked and none given. But he gave as good as he got, and you could see that he loved the battle.

Everything we saw him do seemed to betray a huge enjoyment of life; he seemed to grasp from the beginning that life is one fast moving train, and you have to jump aboard and hold on to your hat and relish the sweep of the wind as it rushes by. You have to enjoy the journey, it's unfaithful not to. I think that's how his country remembers him, in his joy. And it was a joy he knew how to communicate. He knew that life is rich with possibilities, and he believed in opportunity, growth and action.

And when he died, when that comet disappeared over the continent, a whole nation grieved and would not forget. A tailor in New York put up a sign on the door—"Closed because of a death in the family." That sadness was not confined to us. "They cried the rain down that night," said a journalist in Europe. They put his picture up in huts in Brazil and tents in the Congo, in offices in Dublin and Warsaw. That was some of what he did for his country, for when they honored him they were honoring someone essentially, quintessentially, completely American. When they honored John Kennedy, they honored the nation whose virtues, genius—and contradictions—he so fully reflected.

Many men are great, but few capture the imagination and the spirit of the times. The ones who do are unforgettable. Four administrations have passed since John Kennedy's death, five presidents have occupied the Oval Office, and I feel sure that each of them thought of John Kennedy now and then, and his thousand days in the White House.

And sometimes I want to say to those who are still in school, and who sometimes think that history is a dry thing that lives in a book: Nothing is ever lost in that great house; some music plays on.

¹ John Calhoun was an American politician and political theorist who was the seventh vice-president of the United States.

² Stephen Vincent Benet was an American poet who wrote several poems about Robert E. Lee, commander of the Confederate Army in the American Civil War.

³ a word or phrase used to describe or characterize a person

⁴ reference to a famous quote from Kennedy's inauguration speech: "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

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Scoring Guidelines - Kennedy

Rhetorical Analysis

6 points

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In your response you should do the following:

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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 Reagan makes to achieve his purpose of paying tribute to John F. Kennedy.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “During a speech to create an endowment to fund and support the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, President Ronald Reagan makes rhetorical choices to achieve his purpose of paying tribute to Kennedy.” Make a claim but do not address the writer’s rhetorical choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “President Ronald Reagan pays an amazing tribute to John F. Kennedy to suggest that JFK was a beloved leader around the world.” Repeat provided information from the passage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Throughout the speech Reagan makes many rhetorical choices that help him show how Kennedy’s ‘virtue, genius—and contradictions’ deserve our attention.” 	Examples that earn this point: Present a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer’s rhetorical choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Reagan’s speech about the late John F. Kennedy pays a respectful tribute by opening with a shared perspective to interact with the audience, using examples to reflect the way Kennedy has been remembered, and ends the speech with a declaration of the ways he has been influenced.” “As Reagan began his speech, he spoke about how Kennedy was a very inspirational man because of his patriotism. Reagan does this by using rhetorical devices such as metaphors and diction.” “By introducing a counterargument followed by its refutation, Reagan argues that Kennedy was a hardworking leader that demonstrates American values.”
	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. 				

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	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 2

Rhetorical Analysis Question - Kennedy

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Rhetorical Analysis Free-Response Question (2020)
Sample Student Responses

Sample A

[1] Many Americans admired Kennedy and his administration when he was in the White House. He was a loved man. Many share in fond memories of Kennedy up until his death, when the nation grieved for him. In this speech, Ronald Reagan uses the appeal to pathos with emotional tones, a common love for one's country and president, and an admiring tone in order to achieve his goal of raising money to create an endowment to found a new museum in honor of John F. Kennedy.

[2] Throughout the speech, Ronald Reagan uses the rhetorical device of pathos to connect emotionally with his audience. In paragraph 10, Reagan reminds his audience of the grief that the people of America and the world felt when Kennedy was mercilessly assassinated. He reminds the audience that, "when he died, when that comet disappeared over the continent, a whole nation grieved and would not forget" (para. 10). He compares Kennedy to a comet in this sentence to show that he was a person that people were to be in awe of. Kennedy did great things for the world and provided light for the world in the way that a comet flying over a dark night sky, would provide a beautiful light for the people lucky enough to witness the comet. Kennedy was that light in the world. In the rest of the paragraph, Reagan provides examples of people across the globe mourning the loss of Kennedy. He provides examples of people mourning in Brazil, the Congo, and Warsaw to show the profound affect that Kennedy had on not just the Americans, but the whole world. This use of pathos and the appeal to emotion proves to be effective for Reagan as it demonstrates to the people what affect Kennedy had on the world. This use of rhetoric allows the people to ask themselves, if Kennedy and his death had this affect on people all over the world, then why would a library and museum not be constructed in his honor? It is only logical that a man who changed the lives of people everywhere be remembered by the world, let alone his country. When people hear of the mourning that occurred after the death of Kennedy, they are more inclined to donate money to an endowment that will make this possible.

[3] Reagan also appeals to people by using a common love for one's country and president throughout his speech to show people that all of the love people had for Kennedy must be put into an acceptable way to remember him. In the sixth paragraph of the speech, Reagan captures the patriotism that was shown by Kennedy throughout his life. He makes a reference to a previous speech of Kennedy's from his inauguration when Kennedy proclaimed to the country to, "Ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country." This quote that Reagan reminds the audience of is a well-known quote from Kennedy, where his patriotism is shown as he is willing to do whatever it takes to serve his country, and reminding the audience that because Kennedy would do whatever he had to do for the United States of America, they must do whatever it takes to build the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. The incorporation of the "ask not" quote also shows the amount of people that trusted and followed

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Kennedy and what he told them. Reagan provided a deeper insight into the quote when informing the audience that many people who had heard that speech given by Kennedy at his inaugural address now work in the White House serving their country. Reagan demonstrates his own love for Kennedy in the seventh paragraph as he reveals to the audience that he did not love Kennedy when they were opponents, but after the fact he was able to respect Kennedy. This goes to show that even people who did not favor Kennedy were still able to see his courage and commitment to his country, warranting the construction of a library and museum in his name. Paragraph 10 also demonstrates the closeness and love that people felt for President Kennedy as a New Yorker put a sign on his door to close his business after the death of Kennedy that read, "Closed because of a death in the family" (para. 10). Kennedy was similar to a family member for many people. He was the person who cared for them when no one else did. This love for Kennedy is what led to his election to the President of the United States of America. People often remember those that they love in many ways. From a funeral, to burying them, to cremations and placing the urn upon the mantle on the fireplace, family members will do anything to remember those that they love who have passed. Most families in the world are not able to remember their loved ones through a library and museum in their honor, but when everyone in the country shares a common loved one, who passed through a tragic event, people are willing to give money to support the library and museum for President Kennedy.

[4] Although the Reagan was the opponent of Kennedy, at the time of this speech, he had learned to admire Kennedy for his patriotism and intelligence. Reagan reminds the people of this intelligence in the fifth paragraph as he speaks of a book that Kennedy had written as a young man that dealt with the subject of Hitler's rise to power. Someone as intelligent as Kennedy should not be someone that should be forgotten as Reagan is trying to remind people with the creation of an endowment. Reagan also admired Kennedy for his sense of humour that, "could leave his audience weak with laughter" (para. 4). A man that brought so much joy to people's lives should be able to bring the same joy even after his death, as Reagan is trying to communicate to his audience when he advocates for the installment of an endowment through his presence at the fundraising event and his speech. This joy that Kennedy brought to people in his lifetime can be brought to people after his death as Reagan wants people to recognize by donating money to keep the library and museum running. Reagan's admiring tone is ultimately to remind the people of how much others admired Kennedy and they could continue to admire him by talking a walk through his museum or reading about his administration in the library.

[5] Throughout the speech Reagan was able to connect with his audience and receive support to create an endowment and found the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. His speech brought back fond memories for the American people that convinced them to donate to an endowment to support and fund the library and museum. Reagan's efforts proved to be successful as the library and museum are still open today. Through Reagan's use of

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pathos and emotion, reminding the people of a common love for one's country and president, and an admiring tone towards Kennedy, he was able to secure the funds to support the library and museum in Kennedy's honor. Through this speech, Ronald Reagan was able to remind people of the good times and laughs that Kennedy brought them and use those memories to gain support to pay tribute to Kennedy through the support of his library and museum.

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Sample Student Responses

Sample B

[1] President John F. Kennedy was one of the youngest, most shortly lived presidents in American history. In the June of 1985, the presidential library and museum named for him held a fundraising event attended by friends, family, and President Ronald Reagan to create an endowment to fund and support the presidential library. President Ronald Reagan employs parallelism and metaphor in his address to similar mourners of John F. Kennedy to create a reverent tone which he uses to pay his tribute to a great man taken too soon.

[2] The rule of three is a supremely efficient tool in the manipulation of human emotion. There is little else more satisfying to human ears than the final third repetition or part of a phrase. All presidents are known for having taken advantage of this ability, and President Ronald Reagan is known for having been a great speaker. In his description of Kennedy's contradictory qualities, Reagan describes him as being "[S]elf-deprecating yet proud, ironic yet easily moved, highly literary yet utterly at home with the common speech of the ordinary man". Reagan wields parallelism of the same phrase three times, giving his words a certain weight that only a triple employment of parallelism can achieve, to influence his audience into a respectful, mournful state. Similarly, he repeats his assertion of parallelism in the rule of three in his description of "As a leader, as a president, he seemed to have a good, hard, unillusioned understanding of man and his political choices". In his acknowledgement of Kennedy's position and abilities, Reagan paints a picture of solemnity and respect from one great man of high position to another, wielding parallelism for a conducive, satisfactory flow to his words. In his closing paragraphs, when portraying the mourning of a nation upon Kennedy's death, he finally states that his predecessor was "[S]omeone essentially, quintessentially, completely American". In this conclusionary honoring of Kennedy's character, Reagan satisfactorily conveys to his audience his overwhelming respect for Kennedy, and his shared and relatable grief, all accomplished through creating a reverent tone through parallelism.

[3] As grand a speaker as Ronald Reagan was, he was an expert in the field of comparison. Reagan knew that, although he was highly educated, many of Kennedy's supporters were not - and a highly favored way to breed understanding between two unlike parties, is comparison, especially metaphor. When sharing the amount of respect Reagan has for Kennedy, Reagan is forced to admit in his political opposition of the other man; however, knowing that those unknowing of the complicated world of politics would not understand, he compares their relationship to when "[T]he battle's over and the ground is cooled, well, it's then that you see the opposing general's valor". Through his direct comparison of a political competition to a war, his listeners could comprehend the amount of respect he held for Kennedy. For although not everyone understands the working minds of politicians, the valor of those who fight on a battle ground and the respect shared between them is well known since childhood, when we are weaned on fairy tales of knights and chivalry. In a repeating description of Kennedy, Reagan compares him to an otherworldly entity by saying "And when he died, when that comet disappeared over the continent, a whole nation grieved and would

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not forget". All people, no matter where they hail from, hold a reverence for space. Through his direct comparison of Kennedy to a comet, Reagan is displaying his reverence obviously to the common people. And again, when at the end of his speech discussing history, he compares it to a "[G]reat house", and Kennedy to "[M]usic" which "[P]lays on". In this comparison, Reagan finally reveals his overwhelming respect and reverence for Kennedy by comparing him to a significant part of history which will live on forever.

[4] President Ronald Reagan employs parallelism and metaphor in his address to similar mourners of John F. Kennedy to create a reverent tone which he uses to pay his tribute to a great man taken too soon.

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Sample C

[1] In Ronald Reagan's speech at the dedication of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (1985), he asserts that the late President Kennedy was an admirable and patriotic man who wanted what was best for his country. His usage of metaphors, contradicting descriptions, and quotations from other pieces help him to coherently describe Kennedy's complex character as well as his accomplishments as President. Reagan's purpose in his dedication speech is to pay tribute to the late President in order to remind American citizens of the ideas Kennedy embodied as President. He develops a relaxed and almost casual relationship with his audience, the American citizens as well as world leaders who may have been watching his speech, through a reflective and impersonal tone.

[2] In the first lines of his speech, Reagan says that he had been thinking more of Kennedy himself than of the library being dedicated. Reagan goes on to describe his character and its complexity through the use of many contradicting descriptions. This is most clearly evident in his second paragraph, as he uses phrases such as "self-deprecating yet proud", "ironic yet easily moved", and "highly literary yet utterly at home with the common speech of the ordinary man". By giving insight to Kennedy's personality and character, Reagan is able to show the American people that he was not just a President, but he was also someone many of them could relate to. This forces the people to see past his actions as President and respect him for what he was besides the title. Reagan's usage of metaphors to describe how Kennedy thought also helps to put in perspective his relatability. His assertion, "He seemed to grasp from the beginning that life is one fast moving train, and you have to jump aboard and hold on to your hat and relish the sweep of the wind as it rushes by" is just one example of this. By using a metaphor, he tells Americans that he was a man with similar ideals many of them possessed. The idea of living in the moment and living fast is something that many Americans live by, and by showing them that Kennedy thought the same way, he is able to attest to his patriotism and relatability as a man, not necessarily as a President.

[3] Reagan also attributes to President Kennedy by citing quotes from other pieces of work. In his third paragraph he attests to Kennedy's love for history and provides an example of what was presumably one of his favorite historical poems,

"The aide-de-camp knew certain lines of Greek
And other such unnecessary things
... that are good for peace
But are not deemed so serviceable for war."

This poem is another tactic Reagan uses to pay tribute to Kennedy and make the American people aware of his character. The poem is seen as something the people can "share" in a sense with the President. Reagan presents something that some people might share with the late leader: the love of history and poetry. Reagan also pays tribute to Kennedy's infamous speech in which he says, "Ask not

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what your country can do for you --- ask what you can do for your country.” This quote serves as a reminder of what Kennedy stood for as President and the ideals he wanted his citizens to live by. It reminds Americans of the Presidential side of him in contrast to the aforementioned relatable side to him.

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Sample D

[1] John F. Kennedy was one of America's great presidents who left a legacy on the world before he was assassinated in 1963. He was a very charismatic and charming leader, who warmed his citizen's hearts throughout his candidacy for president. In honor of his legacy, The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum was built to remember his fond memories as head of the country. President Ronald Reagan gave a touching speech at the fundraising event to pay tribute to the former president. Reagan used powerful diction, playful anecdotes, and used Kennedy's credibility to enhance his speech about him.

[2] President Reagan used quality language to make his speech more memorable and effective. The use of eloquent writing really left a mark on his citizen's hearts as they listened to him pay tribute to JFK. Reagan did an excellent job portraying the great man that Kennedy was, "...he could sum up a current statesman with an earthly epithet that could leave his audience weak with laughter" (Reagan, 4). The lighthearted words the president used created a smile upon the faces of his audience. They are more susceptible to listen and contribute to the fundraiser if what they are hearing are pleasant things. Reagan also used metaphors to magnify his speech. He described Kennedy's attitude towards life as if "he seemed to grasp from the beginning that life is one fast moving train, and you have to jump aboard and hold on to your hat and relish the swipe of the wind as it rushes by" (Reagan 10). The President used his intelligence to help his listeners better understand his message. His use of a metaphor created an encouraging visual image for his audience to picture, which inspired his listeners to donate to the library.

[3] Ronald Reagan also used high spirited anecdotes to intensify his speech for the JFK fundraiser. Throughout his speech Reagan quotes many things Kennedy enjoyed. He wanted to make his speech seem more personal by describing the things that JFK was fond of, for example, "He loved history and approached it as both romantic and realist. He could quote Stephen Vincent Benet on General Lee's Army" (Reagan 3). By telling the audience something unique about President Kennedy's personal life, it shows that the two presidents had a close bond. The spectators are more likely to be affected by a speech delivered by a friend, than a stranger. Reagan's incorporation of tales John F. Kennedy's life helped to bring his speech to an intimate level. Because of this, his audience is more likely to support the presidential library.

[4] Finally, Reagan used President Kennedy's credibility to make his speech more powerful. He used a combination of pathos and ethos to get through to his listeners. Reagan narrated certain aspects of JFK's life like how "We know from his many friends and colleagues--we know in part from the testimony available at the library--that he was self-deprecating yet proud, ironic yet easily moved, highly literary yet utterly one with the common speech of an ordinary man" (Reagan 2). As Reagan describes how positive and charming JFK was the crowd's hearts are filled with bittersweet emotions. This shows that President Kennedy was a great man towards everyone he encountered. By revealing

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that he was a righteous man, the audience is more open to really taking Reagan's speech to heart. President Ronald also expresses JFK as a man of the people because "He was a patriot who summoned patriotism from the heart of a sated country...he cared that his country would be safe" (Reagan 7). Ronald Reagan used more of an ethos approach with this quote by stating how much love he had for his country and people. This gave credibility to Kennedy because it showed how qualified he was to be the President of the United States. People are more willing to fund a library dedicated to a certified leader.

[5] President Ronald Reagan used mighty diction, personal anecdotes, and used Kennedy's credibility to strengthen the speech about him. His persuasive wording amplified his ability to get through to his audience. Reagan's use of playful stories gave his speech a more personal feel. Lastly, the president used ethos so the spectators would be more susceptible to take his speech into real consideration. He wanted to move his citizens while honoring the assassinated president, John F. Kennedy. The rhetorical techniques he used really enhanced his speech, which increased the chance of getting through to his audience. With a great speech he was about to pay tribute to JFK, while encouraging the listeners to fund and support the presidential library.

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Sample E

[1] President Ronald Reagan met the Kennedy family at a fundraising event to help the Kennedy Library foundation create a fund to support the presidential library. He presents a speech to the population attending this fundraiser to pay tribute to John F. Kennedy. In his attempt to do so, Ronald Reagan uses rhetorical devices to achieve his purpose of his speech and make it as effective and heart warming as possible to his audience as well as the Kennedy family. The rhetorical devices used by Reagan to achieve his purpose of his speech of paying tribute to John F. Kennedy are Atmosphere, Imagery, and Apostrophe.

[2] Ronald Reagan uses the rhetorical device atmosphere to achieve the purpose of his speech. He uses this rhetorical device to create a general emotional mood of his entire speech. By recognizing the Kennedy Library not for the library in itself but for John F. Kennedy, the man himself. He brings it back to the man who started it all and what he stood for. Reagan states in paragraph two "He was a writer who could expound with ease on the moral forces that shaped John Calhoun's political philosophy, on the other hand, he possessed a most delicate and refined appreciation for Boston's political wards...". This brings back to many people memories of a great loss. Reagan uses this atmosphere to get his audience to feel what he is feeling while also creating a tone to help his audience remember the man who stands for this library. Ronald Reagan reaches his goal for his purpose using atmosphere to pay tribute to JFK but he also achieves that goal with Imagery.

[3] Imagery is used by Ronald Reagan to achieve his purpose of his speech. He creates a picture for us of this man to show us an honorable man and communicate his success. In paragraph 10 he states, "I think that's how his country remembers him, in his joy... when he died, when that comet disappeared over the continent, a whole nation grieved and would not forget." This creates the audience to remember JFK's death. It also sparks the reader to envision the comet disappearing and seeing his nation grieve. Reagan used this to spark emotion to remember what John F. Kennedy stood for and what an impact his death had on not only his family but the nation. President Ronald Reagan used Imagery to achieve his purpose of his speech by putting a picture in his audience's head of the man JFK was.

[4] Reagan lastly uses apostrophe to achieve his purpose of his speech. He addresses the man himself in his entirety and says his personality and what makes him a great person as well as president.

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

Sample F

[1] Reagan wanted to give a strong argument to pay tribute to JFK. He use multiple rhetorical devices to make his speech better. In the article, Reagan uses a paradox and an analogy to show Kennedy's value.

[2] To begin with, in the first paragraph, Reagan talks about how John F Kennedy was many things, he says "He was self-deprecating, yet proud". This is a paradox because he is contradicting everything he says about Kennedy. By doing this, he means to explains that he has many things that make him a great man. He is a little bit of everything which is what makes him special.

[3] To further continue, in the 8th paragraph, Reagan says, "But you know it's true: when the battle's over and the ground is cool, well it's then that you see the opposing generals' valor". He is using an analogy to explain how we did not take the time to appreciate who he was, until he was gone.

[4] Overall, Reagan uses specific rhetorical devices to give a strong argument to the public about Kennedy's tribute and what it stands for.

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

Sample G

[1] In the speech that Reagan made he uses Anaphora and Analogy in it. The use of these devices makes the writing more interesting. This makes the way a speech more interesting than than knowing what they are saying, finding what they are trying to say is much more intriguing.

[2] When Regan is describing how Kennedy is he uses Anaphora in his speech. In the second paragraph he says "That he was self-deprecating yet proud, ironic yet easily moved, highly literary yet utterly at home with the common speech of the ordinary man." When using yet in each sentence he he makes it shown that he was all of those words. Using yet repeatedly makes a better understanding on how Anaphora is used to honor Kennedy in his speech.

[3] In the tenth paragraph he uses Analogy to describe Kennedy's way of life. He says "Everything we saw him do seemed to betray a huge enjoyment of life, he seemed to grasp from the beginning that life is one fast moving truth," He is comaning his life like a train ride and you have to enjoy your time. Using Analogy makes the story of Kennedy more lively.

[4] In the speech he uses Anaphora + Analogy to pay tribute to Kennedy to make a more appreciated way by using in his speeches.

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Scoring Commentaries - Packet 2

Rhetorical Analysis Question - Kennedy

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

Index of Scores for Samples

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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 in the final sentence of the introduction: “In this speech, Ronald Reagan uses the appeal to pathos with emotional tones, a common love for one’s country and president, and an admiring tone in order to achieve his goal of raising money to create an endowment to found a new museum in honor of John F. Kennedy.” The small misstep between “fund” and “found” is understandable in a timed writing and does not substantively impact the response’s analysis.

Row B: 4/4

The response earned four points for Row B because it successfully integrates specific textual references to support all claims within the student’s argument. Each paragraph of the response begins with a clear claim, with numerous examples and commentary clearly connecting back to the thesis’s claim that Reagan’s goal is to raise money for the presidential library. In the second paragraph, the response focuses on Reagan’s attempt “to connect emotionally with his audience.” Specific evidence from paragraph 10—Reagan’s reference to the comet—is followed with the explanation that Reagan includes “this sentence to show that [Kennedy] was a person that people were to be in awe of.” Additional textual evidence is provided to show Kennedy’s international appeal. Commentary then explains that this “appeal to emotion proves to be effective for Reagan as it demonstrates to people what affect Kennedy had on the world.” The response then combines this evidence and commentary to assert that the audience would be “more inclined to donate money to an endowment that will make this possible.” The third paragraph follows through with the thesis forecast that “Reagan also appeals to people by using a common love for one’s country and president throughout his speech.” Evidence of Reagan’s reference to Kennedy’s famous inaugural address is followed by persuasive analysis: “This quote [‘ask not’] that Reagan reminds the audience of is a well-known quote from Kennedy, where his patriotism is shown as he is willing to do whatever it takes to serve his country, and reminding the audience that because Kennedy would do whatever he had to do for the United States of America, they must do whatever it takes to build the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.” The paragraph continues to provide evidence and commentary that both support the response’s line of reasoning about Reagan’s use of emotional appeals and tie back to Reagan’s fundraising objective. The fourth paragraph continues this consistent and thorough development by establishing Reagan’s admiration through Kennedy, dealing with the complexity in the passage that Reagan was a political opponent of Kennedy’s. However, evidence of Reagan’s respect for Kennedy’s intelligence and humor is explained through the idea of Kennedy’s preoccupation with “joy.” Again, commentary connects the importance of these rhetorical choices back to the response’s thesis: “This joy that Kennedy brought to people in his lifetime can be brought to people after his death as Reagan wants people to recognize by donating money to keep the library and museum running.”

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
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Row C: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row C for a nuanced understanding of the rhetorical situation, returning consistently to Reagan's role as a fundraiser for the cause of Kennedy's memorial library and museum. This strategy has a cumulative effect of establishing a strong line of reasoning.

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 in the final sentence of the introduction:

“President Ronald Reagan employs parallelism and metaphor in his address to similar mourners of John F. Kennedy to create a reverent tone which he uses to pay his tribute to a great man taken too soon.”

Row B: 4/4

The response earned four points for Row B for integrating evidence from throughout the passage to support the analysis. Although the body of the response begins with a rather lengthy discussion of the “rule of three,” the commentary to explain Reagan’s “description of Kennedy’s contradictory qualities” as influencing “his audience into a respectful, mournful state” helps to explain Reagan’s line of reasoning. The third paragraph provides a clear explanation for why Reagan would compare battle and politics, even if built off the assumption that “many of Kennedy’s supporters were not” highly educated. The commentary to explain this does extend Reagan’s line of reasoning, demonstrating “the valor of those who fight on a battle ground and the respect shared between them.” The response then turns to the evidence and commentary of the “direct comparison of Kennedy to a comet...displaying [Reagan’s] reverence obviously to the common people.” In addition, the response addresses the comparison of Kennedy to music, explaining that “Reagan finally reveals his overwhelming respect and reverence for Kennedy by comparing him to a significant part of history which will live on forever,” fully explaining Reagan’s line of reasoning.

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C. While the response offers a good discussion of Reagan’s appreciation for Kennedy, it does not focus on the larger rhetorical situation of Reagan’s speech. The response discusses some key attributes of the speech but does not discuss complexities in a sophisticated manner. The language communicates well, but it 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 developing a clearly defensible thesis, most directly conveyed in the second and third sentences of the introduction: “[Reagan’s] usage of metaphors, contradicting descriptions, and quotations from other pieces help him to coherently describe Kennedy’s complex character as well as his accomplishments as President. Reagan’s purpose in his dedication speech is to pay tribute to the late President in order to remind American citizens of the ideas Kennedy embodied as President.”

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. The second paragraph advances the claim that Reagan describes Kennedy’s “character and its complexity through the use of many contradicting descriptions.” Specific textual evidence of Reagan’s use of contradictions is provided in the third sentence of the paragraph and then explained through commentary—“By giving insight to Kennedy’s personality and character, Reagan is able to show the American people that he was not just a President, but he was also someone many of them could relate to. This forces the people to see past his actions as President and respect him for what he was besides the title”—to establish a line of reasoning as to why Reagan would make this rhetorical choice. The paragraph continues with a similar explanation about the role of metaphor in the speech. The third paragraph is an example of commentary failing to integrate some evidence, as the explanation that “love of history and poetry” might be something people “share with the late leader” is not as persuasive as earlier use of evidence and commentary.

Row C: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row C as it suggests a nuanced understanding of the rhetorical situation and is able to show sophistication even at its relatively short length. The second paragraph highlights the deliberate rhetorical manipulation of his audience by Reagan, concluding the paragraph by noting the manner in which Reagan “is able to attest to [Kennedy’s] patriotism and relatability as a man, not necessarily as a President.” Even that quoted phrase serves as evidence of a consistent vividness and persuasiveness in the response’s style.

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
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Sample D

Score: 4/6 Points (A1 – B3 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row A, articulating a defensible thesis in the last two sentences of the introduction: “President Ronald Reagan gave a touching speech at the fundraising event to pay tribute to the former president. Reagan used powerful diction, playful anecdotes, and used Kennedy’s credibility to enhance his speech about him.”

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 the second paragraph, the response makes claims about Reagan’s “quality language,” arguing that the “lighthearted words the president used created a smile upon the faces of his audience.” The following commentary, that the people in the audience “are more susceptible to listen and contribute to the fundraiser if what they are hearing are pleasant things,” is simplistic, if not inaccurate. There is an additional claim and evidence about the role of metaphor; however, the commentary that Reagan “used his intelligence to help his listener better understand his message” fails to integrate the evidence in support of the thesis. In the third paragraph, the response claims that Reagan “also used high spirited anecdotes to intensify his speech for the JFK fundraiser,” and then provides specific evidence for support. The paragraph finishes with commentary that explains how the evidence contributes to Reagan’s purpose: “Reagan’s incorporation of tales John F. Kennedy’s life helped to bring his speech to an intimate level. Because of this, his audience is more likely to support the presidential library.” The fourth paragraph is more successful in the moments when it does not label the classical appeals. The evidence that “Reagan narrated certain aspects of JFK’s life” is explained with the commentary that as “Reagan describes how positive and charming JFK was the crowd’s hearts are filled with bittersweet emotions.” The paragraph concludes with an explanation of how specific textual evidence from Reagan’s speech shows that JFK was “a man of the people” and therefore “gave credibility to Kennedy,” with the result that the audience would be “more willing to fund a library dedicated to a certified leader.”

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C. The response’s attempts to integrate the rhetorical situation, while fair, are not sophisticated. There is not an attempt to analyze the interaction among Reagan’s different rhetorical choices. While the language is generally clear, it does not have a consistently vivid or persuasive style.

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Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
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Sample E

Score: 3/6 Points (A1 – B2 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row A. The first paragraph of the response establishes a defensible thesis over the course of several sentences, ending with a general claim about Reagan’s purpose: “The rhetorical devices used by Reagan to achieve his purpose of his speech of paying tribute to John F. Kennedy are Atmosphere, Imagery, and Apostrophe.”

Row B: 2/4

The response earned two points for Row B because it includes some specific relevant evidence and explains how some of the evidence relates to the thesis. The second paragraph begins with a claim that Reagan “uses the rhetorical device atmosphere to achieve the purpose of his speech.” While the response does correctly identify Reagan’s move to address Kennedy the man as opposed to the library, the response struggles to connect the quoted textual evidence to the claim. However, the commentary for this paragraph does explain that “Reagan uses this atmosphere to get his audience to feel what he is feeling while also creating a tone to help his audience remember the man who stands for this library.” While simplistic, it is not inaccurate. In the third paragraph, a claim about Reagan’s use of imagery precedes quoted evidence from the passage. However, the explanation of the comet disappearing is too literal, leading to a simplistic explanation that does not strengthen the argument: “President Ronald Reagan used Imagery to achieve his purpose of his speech by putting a picture in his audience’s head of the man JFK was.”

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C. While the response does attempt to discuss the relevance of the rhetorical situation, it does not do so consistently throughout the response. No complexities or tensions from the passage are addressed, and while the language of the response is basically clear, the style is not consistently vivid or persuasive.

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Rhetorical Analysis Question (2020)
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Sample F

Score: 2/6 Points (A1 – B1 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

The response earned one point for Row A for the final sentence of the introduction: “Reagan uses a paradox and an analogy to show Kennedy’s value.”

Row B: 1/4

The response earned one point for Row B. The second paragraph includes evidence and a claim when observing that Reagan “says ‘He was self-deprecating, yet proud.’ This is a paradox.” The remainder of the paragraph substitutes summary of the evidence and content from the passage but does not explain how the use of contradictions shows Kennedy’s value. The third paragraph repeats the pattern of the second, offering specific evidence from the text, but the claim about why Reagan uses an analogy suggests a misreading of the passage when it asserts that “we did not take the time to appreciate who he was, until he was gone.”

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C. While recognizing this is a speech, the response does not engage with the rhetorical situation of the fundraising event. It does acknowledge some of the complexities Reagan identifies, but the lack of commentary limits the sophistication of the analysis. And while clear, the response is not consistently vivid or persuasive in style.

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Sample G

Score: 1/6 Points (A0 – B1 – C0)

Row A: 0/1

The response did not earn the point for Row A. The first sentence of the response does identify rhetorical strategies: “In the speech that Reagan made he uses Anaphora and Analogy in it.” The second sentence does have a claim—“The use of these devices makes the writing more interesting”—but it does not respond to the prompt because it does not address Reagan’s purpose of paying tribute to JFK.

Row B: 1/4

The response earned one point for Row B because it includes references to the text that are vaguely relevant and provide little to no commentary. In the second paragraph, the response makes a claim about the use of anaphora and does provide specific textual evidence. The attempt at commentary is initially summary, and the final sentence of the paragraph is unable to link the rhetorical term to purpose, instead offering the oversimplification that “[u]sing yet repeatedly makes a better understanding on how Anaphora is used to honor Kennedy in his speech.” The third paragraph proceeds similarly, with the commentary observing that “[u]sing Analogy makes the story of Kennedy more lively.”

Row C: 0/1

The response did not earn a point for Row C because it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought. While the response does touch on a complexity in the contradictions quoted in the second paragraph, the commentary cited above does not reveal a sophisticated understanding of specific rhetorical choices.