AP Seminar EOC A Study Guide

Big Picture
- 12.5% of your AP Score
- Recommended to spend 30 minutes on it

Question 1: *Identify the author's argument, main idea, or thesis. (3 points)*
- It should take 1-2 minutes
- Address **3 components** of the author's main idea or argument.
  - Either 3 claims, or one MAIN CLAIM with 2 SUPPORTING CLAIMS
- You should do part of question 1 first, then move on to question 2 & 3, then come back and revise your response to question 2.

General Outline: The author's main idea/argument is that X should/helps us X because X
  - Example: The author's main argument is that *although* the lack of funding threatens libraries, they are an internal part of the American social fabric by bridging the digital divide by striving for "equity of access."

Question 2: *Explain the author's line of reasoning by identifying the claims used to build the argument and the connections between them. (6 points)*
- It should take 8-10 minutes
- Identify 3-4 claims; do **NOT** go over 5
- Goal: Identify claims and find **connections**
  - See if the author established contexts, then write: "to establish the context for his argument, the author…"
  - Remember: high-scoring responses always use words to indicate connections between different claims and pieces of evidence.
- Talk about how the author addresses a **counterargument**, if applicable.
  - The author introduces a counterclaim by acknowledging [opposing perspective], stating that [summary of opposing argument].
  - However, the author refutes this by [explaining how the rebuttal is constructed], arguing that [rebuttal argument].
- General Outline: The author begins with her first claim, X. He/She elaborates on this, X. X is given to support the claim.
  - Example: John Smith begins with his first claim, stating that the central problem of American society is the digital divide. He explains how marginalized communities suffer from unequal access to the Internet compared to their counterparts. He gives examples of communities and a quote to support the claim.
- Potential Connections:

- ○ This is verified…, Further…, This is connected with…, This draws back to his/her first claim…, Later, he/she…
- General Outline: X builds his argument around three claims: X, then that X, because X, and finally, that X.

Question 3: *Evaluate the effectiveness of the evidence the author uses to support the claims made in the argument. (6 points)*

- It should take 8-10 minutes
- Evaluate 3-4 claims; do not go over 5
- Goal: Identify claims and evaluate their *relevance* and *credibility*
- Start with a topic sentence
  - ○ Example: Throughout the article X, John Smith cites past studies of X to support his claim that X
- Evidence
  - ○ Cite Claims specifically: What was included? How effective is it? Is it without evidence? Does it have weak evidence?
- Do not just focus on the good things; LOOK FOR A **WEAKNESS** in the argument!
- Mention SPECIFIC pieces of evidence; don't just say the author "cites a professor."
  - ○ Professor of what? from where?
- Example
  - ○ Aligning with his first claim, John Smith opens his article citing X from the X to support the claim that X. This study X. The research provided was credible and relevant (2022), coming from X. However, the article needs to give more information as to who conducted the study, only stating that the scientists were from Australia. If the author had mentioned a specific institute, it would have improved his credibility.
  - ○ The Author's second claim is that X. However, the author does not cite any evidence and instead uses a cause-and-effect relationship as evidence for this claim. The lack of evidence hurts the author's credibility because this does not include any research or statistics to help support the claim. Without any evidence or research, the overall credibility of the article is damaged.
    This is not about whether the author used correct citation format; it's about whether she used relevant sources and how those sources are qualified.

Sentence Starters

1. The author uses relevant, credible evidence from... to substantiate the claim that...

2. A particularly effective piece of evidence is... because it demonstrates...

3. While the author attempts to establish credibility by..., this source may not be the most reliable because...

4. The author effectively supports the claim that... by using statistics from...

5. The evidence from... is particularly relevant because...

6. Overall, the author's evidence is [strong/weak] because...