

## AP LANGUAGE & COMPOSITION STUDY GUIDE

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### Figurative Language

Do a Google search for “figurative language” or visit <http://grammar.about.com/od/fh/g/figlangterm.htm> to review figurative language element definitions and examples.

### Rhetorical Devices

Do a Google search for “rhetorical terms” or visit <http://grammar.about.com/od/terms/a/APterms.htm> to review rhetorical devices definitions and examples. Note that this will be helpful during the multiple-choice test, but your **analysis essays should NOT focus on devices**. Rather, you want to discuss strategies in your essays.

### Rhetorical Strategies

Authors employ rhetorical devices in their writing in order to be strategic in their writing, but the devices themselves should not necessarily be the focus of your analysis essays. Your analysis essays should focus on the strategies, not the specific devices. Here is a list of some devices and the strategies they might fall under:

RHETORICAL DEVICE EXAMPLES <i>Okay to identify in text evidence within paragraphs, but not as a focal point for entire paragraphs.</i>	TERM DEFINITIONS	RHETORICAL STRATEGIES <i>Schema Map Elements: Use as overall focal points for paragraph discussions.</i>
Aphorism	A tersely phrased statement of a truth or opinion.	<b>Persona, Invention, Intention, Emotional Appeal (pathos), Diction/Tone, Syntax, Figurative Language</b>
Appeal to Authority	A fallacy in which a speaker or writer seeks to persuade not by giving evidence but by appealing to the respect people have for a famous person or institution.	<b>Persona, Invention, Purpose, Intention, Emotional Appeal (pathos)</b>
Extended Metaphor	A comparison between two unlike things that continues throughout a series of sentences in a paragraph or lines in a poem.	<b>Persona, Invention, Purpose, Intention, Logos, Emotional Appeal (pathos), Organization/Form/Structure, Imagery, Figurative Language</b>
Metonymy	A figure of speech in which one word or phrase is substituted for another with which it is closely associated (such as "crown" for "royalty").	<b>Persona, Invention, Intention, Emotional Appeal, Diction/Tone, Imagery, Figurative Language</b>
Synecdoche	A figure of speech in which a part is used to represent the whole or the whole for a part.	<b>Persona, Invention, Intention, Emotional Appeal, Diction/Tone, Imagery, Figurative Language</b>
Zeugma	The use of a word to modify two+ words although its use may be grammatically or logically incorrect with one. Ex: You held your breath and the door for me.	<b>Persona, Invention, Intention, Emotional Appeal (pathos), Organization/Form/Structure, Diction/Tone, Imagery, Figurative Language</b>

## Essay Step-by-Step Guidelines

While these are not hard and fast “rules” for writing your essays, they are a great “cheat sheet” to have in your brain when you walk in to take your AP test so MEMORIZE THEM! If you struggle to organize and/or develop your thoughts, use these step-by-step directions to stay focused. Then feel free to deviate as you need to, but don’t lose your way or go off topic! AP stands for “Answer the Prompt.” No matter how well you write, if you don’t answer the prompt, you can’t earn higher than a 3 on the essay!

For a full description of each element listed below, see Mrs. Byrd’s teacher page, under Curriculum-Course Documents.

### ANALYSIS

#### Introduction

1. Essential Truth
2. Thesis Statement: Author + adjective + rhetorical strategy 1 + rhetorical strategy 2 + rhetorical strategy 3 + strong verb + function

#### Body Paragraphs (Suggested total body paragraphs is 2 to 4)

1. Assertion
2. Textual Evidence
3. Analysis (answer AT LEAST THREE):
  - How is the intended audience reached through the author’s use of this strategy?
  - How does the author use the strategy to create persona?
  - How does the author use the strategy to create invention?
  - How does the author use the strategy to fulfill his or her purpose?
  - How does the author use the strategy to fulfill his or her intention?
  - How does the author establish credibility and trust with the intended audience through the use of the strategy?
  - How does the author appeal to the intended audience on an emotional level through the use of the strategy?
  - How does the author use arrangement to lead the audience to understand through the use of the strategy?
  - What does the use of this rhetorical device say about the author?

#### Conclusion

1. Restate Thesis
2. Closing Statement

### ARGUMENT

#### Introduction

1. Grabber/Context
2. Thesis Statement: “Although” + opposition + stance on the issue + reasons or umbrella category for reasons

#### Body Paragraphs (Suggested total body paragraphs is 2 to 4)

1. Counterargument/Claim
2. Evidence
3. Warrant
  - Assumption
  - Backing/Explanation
  - Effect on people and/or planet

#### Conclusion

1. Restate Claim
2. Closing Statement

## SYNTHESIS

### Introduction

1. Grabber/Context
2. Thesis Statement: stance on the issue + reasons or umbrella category for reasons

### Body Paragraphs (Suggested total body paragraphs is 2 to 4)

1. Claim
2. Half & Half Evidence
3. Warrant
  - Assumption
  - Backing/Explanation
4. Half & Half Rebuttal
5. Half & Half Qualification
  - Strategic Concession
  - Refutation
  - Demonstration of Irrelevance

### Conclusion

1. Restate Claim
2. Closing Statement

## **Essay Exam Tips**

- Read essay prompts as texts, making certain you have understood what you are being asked to do before you begin writing. ANSWER THE PROMPT!
- You must first decipher a text's meaning before going on a successful search for strategies. To begin without doing so leads to a list of parts that may be only loosely related to the primary effect of the text. Such approaches are often superficial in their observations.
- Understand the difference between "telling" details and details that merely pad arguments. More details are not necessarily better. Three examples may or may not be better than two.
- Don't refer to literary texts or historical accounts simply to gain credence for your arguments. Instead, use evidence for which you can clearly articulate your rationale. No matter how high-minded evidence may sound, it is simply not convincing if you cannot fully explain its relevance.
- Write neatly. You don't want your reader to have to guess at what you're saying and guess wrong.
- Read the passage carefully. Students who do the best respond intelligently to the prompt and understand the overall meaning, as well as how it was constructed.
- Take some time to plan out your response. Using the step-by-step guidelines can help.
- Don't spend a lot of time dwelling on an extended introduction or background. Jump in!
- Organize your work. It is a sign of a strong writer to include a thesis and clear topic sentences.
- Don't over quote in your paper. Ground your arguments in the text, but if you spend your entire time re-writing the prompt, there's no evidence of how smart you really are.
- Don't make things up.
- Don't waste time or space writing notes or drawing pictures for the readers. It's annoying.
- Cross things out (a simple line will do). You can also use arrows to re-direct readers to other places in the booklet. It is a timed test with a surprise question; readers understand.
- Readers know what the rhetorical tools are and they want to know that you do, too. If you simply list them, readers won't know that you understand the meaning. Show what you see in the essay and then analyze it. Explain how the tool works, where and why.
- To push your writing to the next level, work to avoid clichés. If you do use a cliché, like "pulling on the heartstrings," do more than just changing the verb (like "tugging" or "plucking"). Come up with something more original.

## Essay Prompts & Samples

- Past Prompts: [http://mseffie.com/AP/Language\\_Prompts.pdf](http://mseffie.com/AP/Language_Prompts.pdf)
- Analysis Essay Samples & Scoring:  
[http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/repository/ap06\\_englishlang\\_samples\\_q2.pdf](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/repository/ap06_englishlang_samples_q2.pdf)
- Argument Essay Samples & Scoring:  
[http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/ap/apcentral/ap13\\_english\\_lang\\_q3.pdf](http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/ap/apcentral/ap13_english_lang_q3.pdf)
- Synthesis Essay Samples & Scoring:  
[http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/ap/apcentral/ap13\\_english\\_lang\\_q1.pdf](http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/ap/apcentral/ap13_english_lang_q1.pdf)

## Multiple-Choice Practice Tests

- 5 Steps to a 5 – 500 Questions:  
<http://www.husd.org/cms/lib08/AZ01001450/Centricity/Domain/2090/AP%205%20Steps%20to%20a%205%20500%20Questions.pdf>

## Multiple-Choice Tips for Success

- Put each question into your own words.
- Eliminate all obviously wrong answer choices with an X in your test booklet.
- Be wary of irrelevancies, absolutes (e.g., *always* and *never*), and approximations.
- Re-read specific line(s) in the passage within context by reading 2-3 lines before and after, as well.
- If you are stumped by a question, make your best guess and mark it with a question mark in the margin of the test booklet then come back to it later.
- Double-check question numbers with numbers on your answer sheet and make sure you are marking answers in the right place.
- If you finish early, review your answers, especially those that gave you trouble.

## MC Common Distractors

- Too specific
- Too general
- Violates tone of the passage
- Half right/half wrong
- Irrelevancy and/or common assumption
- Opposite of example or detail in the passage
- Generally true but distorts the specific section: feature is not mentioned in the passage; goes beyond scope of passage; is true but doesn't focus on the specific question
- Absolutes, overstated (e.g. always, never, only)
- Only echoes background language of the passage
- Clearly wrong answers

## Question Types

- Main idea/tone/attitude
- Author's meaning and purpose
- Word choice – diction
- Syntax/sentence structure
- Function/methodology
- Rhetorical terminology
- Word in Context – Pronoun/antecedent
- Structure/organization/arrangement
- Rhetorical modes/rhetorical reasoning
- Documentation/citation

## Questions about Rhetoric

The majority of the questions will be questions about rhetorical concepts.

- Diction – The author’s choice of words to create tone, effects, and meaning
  - Connotations of words represent the feelings attached to ideas, events, and objects as they convey the ideas, events, and objects themselves; used to arouse emotion and create connection with readers
- Metaphorical Language – Includes metaphor, simile, allusion, analogy, metonymy, synecdoche
  - Used to make comparisons, describe feelings or experiences, and to make ideas clearer, more vivid, and more concrete
- Tone – The narrator’s or speaker’s attitude toward the subject of the passage (not always author’s attitude)
  - Tone Terms:
    - Negative: bitter, condescending, contemptuous, disdainful, disgusted, facetious, flippant, indignant, irreverent, mocking, patronizing, pedantic, petty, sarcastic, satiric, scornful, teasing, threatening
    - Positive: benevolent, compassionate, determined, ecstatic, effusive, elegiac, enthusiastic, hopeful, laudatory, learned, supportive, sympathetic
    - Neutral: bantering, colloquial, confident, detached, didactic, factual, informal, objective, restrained, scholarly
  - Sentence Types:
    - Exclamatory – express a wish, desire, or command; begging, beseeching, praying, imploring, apologizing, requesting, advising, commanding, persuading; use exclamation points
    - Interrogative – questions that challenge or express denial, disbelief, or hesitation
    - Rhetorical questions – questions whose answers are implied by the question itself; call attention to obvious propositions; used to make arguments more dramatic and convincing
    - Declarative – factual statement; tone is often neutral, but not always (can be charged with emotion through word choices)
  - Sentence Length:
    - Long sentences – allow authors to differentiate important ideas from less important ideas
    - Short sentences – several used in a row creates emphasis and makes points quickly and with force
  - Sentence Structures:
    - Simple – noun and verb
    - Compound – two simple sentences put together with FANBOYS
    - Complex – simple sentence with one or more dependent clauses
    - Compound complex – compound sentence with one or more dependent clauses
    - Periodic – important ideas are at the end of the sentence (most sentences tend to be periodic)
    - Loose – reveal their “secrets” right away
  - The Sound of Sentences:
    - Onomatopoeia – words that imitate the sound they describe; used to create drama and animation
    - Alliteration – repetition of initial sounds in words or syllables; used for ornament and emphasis; other sound repetitions are created through assonance, consonance and rhyme
    - Rhythm – combination of sounds, accents, phrases, and pauses; used to arouse emotion in readers

### English Grammar & Rhetorical Questions

Three or four exam questions will focus on the following:

- How grammatical structures are used to convey meaning or create certain effects (e.g., “What is the effect of the author’s use of parallelism?”)
- The function of certain words (e.g., “The word \_\_\_\_\_ modifies which of the following?”)
- What rhetorical strategies are used in the passage (e.g., “The author employs all of the following strategies except which of the following?”)

Make sure you understand the following, among others:

- Types of sentences (simple, compound, complex, periodic, loose)
- Parts of speech (noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, preposition, exclamation)
- Parts of sentences (subject, predicate, object, clauses)

### Comprehension Questions

Some exam questions will include the following:

- The meaning of the passage as a whole
- Particular words in context
- The meaning or significance of certain details

### Questions about Footnotes

Three or four exam questions will ask you to interpret information found in the footnotes and/or a bibliography accompanying the passage.

- Footnotes – give detailed information about where material in the passage was found
- Bibliography – lists the works cited or consulted

### Other Questions

- “Identify the speaker.” – need to look first for pronoun usage – 1st person indicates speaker is speaking from his or her point of view (may or may not be the author)
- “Which of the following phrases illustrates \_\_\_\_\_?” – need to understand meaning and context of the piece or parts of the piece
- “Which of the following describes the rhetorical function?” – need to define what role each choice plays in the – What meaning does it add? Does it affect tone? Does it develop purpose? Does it create an effect?
- “What does the word \_\_\_\_\_ refer to?” OR “What does the expression \_\_\_\_\_ mean?” – need to read entire sentence (and possibly surrounding sentences) where word or expression appears
- “\_\_\_\_\_ can best be described as \_\_\_\_\_” – need to read entire passage to see what kinds of details are emphasized and/or repeated about the person, place, or idea in question
- “Identify the theme.” – need to eliminate answers that are obviously wrong then consider which of the choices left are most significant and/or demonstrated in the passage
- “Identify the style of the passage.” – need to identify the answer choice in which ALL adjectives presented are true