**AP Language and Composition – The Columnist Project**

***Remember****: You too are a writer of arguments, a rhetorician. Be studying this columnist to learn what he or she does well that you can incorporate into your own written rhetoric. Also, studying a current columnist will steep you in current events and help make you a more informed citizen. And, it will help you be prepared for argument and synthesis questions on the AP exam.*

**The Assignment:**

As a means of keeping up to date with public issues, you are required to follow a national columnist in a newspaper. Choose a columnist who discusses national issues, such as finance, politics, or social issues; columnists who write about sports, fashion, or culture/movies (just to name a few) are not appropriate.

You must collect three current and, if possible, consecutive, columns by the same author. Attached is a list of possible columnists and websites where you can find links to their work.

**Due Dates: Due Nov. 28 Due Dec. 5 Due Dec Dec. 12**

This is a FOUR-PART assignment:

**Part I: Citation**. Each article must be cited according to MLA formatting as a Works Cited entry.

* You are encouraged to use easybib.com or bibme.com, son of citation or resources from Purdue OWL’s MLA page.
* Be sure you have selected the correct type of source

**Part II: Annotation.** Each article must be annotated for the following:

* Rhetorical Situation: Exigence (**exigence** is an issue, problem, or situation that causes or prompts someone to write or speak.),
* Audience -
* Purpose -

1. What audience does s/he assume? How do you know?
2. What is the writer responding to in the column?
3. What is the writer’s intent or what is the call to action?

* Claim (a **claim** is an arguable statement), Data (Factual material, circumstances of the situation), Warrant (**warrant**, which is an underlying belief that connects a reason and the claim)

1. What is the claim?
2. How much is based on observation? Personal experience? Interviews? Fact?
3. What unstated assumptions does the columnist make?

* Organization

1. How does s/he open the column? How does s/he close the column?
2. How soon does s/he announce the thesis? (inductive or deductive)?
3. How does s/he organize? What are the parts or sections of the column?

* Rhetorical Strategies: Syntax, Diction, Tone, Figurative Language, Appeals

1. What sort of diction/word choice characterizes the columnist?
2. What sort of syntax characterizes the columnist?
3. What sort of tone does the speaker employ? Are tone shifts present? If so, what is their purpose?
4. Mark places in the text that evoke a reaction from you, be it laughter, anger, or confusion.

**Part III: Précis** [pray-see]. After annotating the column, write a FOUR-sentence précis, following the example given below:

Précis instructions: When writing your précis, OBJECTIVELY summarize the article in your own words. Note: Before you begin writing your précis, ACTIVELY READ the column a number of times to make sure that you completely understand the author’s rhetorical - situation and argumentative stance.

**Part IV. Response**. Below the précis, compose your one-paragraph SUBJECTIVE response, noting any questions, objections, or enlightenment generated by the article. The questions will answer are:

* Do you agree or disagree with the editorial’s viewpoints? Why?
* Did the editorial make you want to know more about the issue? The answer cannot be no.
* What are some of the author’s best arguments? What makes them valid?
* Which arguments or points made by the author do not make sense to you? Why?
* Which arguments or points made by the author are most effective to you? What makes them valid? Why?
* How does this editorial connect with other knowledge that you have from other sources?
* What patterns have you observed within the article?

**Bottom Line: 1) MLA bib entries 2) Annotated articles 3) Typed Précis 4) Typed Responses**

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**Example Précis**

1. The first sentence identifies the essay’s author and title, provides the article’s date in parentheses, use some form of the verb “says” (claims, asserts, suggests, argues) followed by “that” and the essay’s thesis (paraphrased or quoted).

* Example: *In his “In Defense of Prejudice” (1995), Jonathan Rauch argues that prejudice in society should not be eliminated.*

1. The second sentence describes the author’s support for the thesis, usually in chronological order.

* Example: *Rauch supports his position by providing anecdotal and historical evidence culled from segments of society which illustrates the futility and harm associated with attempts to eliminate prejudice.*

1. The third sentence analyzes the author’s purpose using an “in order to” statement.

* Example: *Rauch hopes to shift the paradigm away from absolutism, the idea of punitive action against racism and prejudice, in order to move society toward rejection, the idea of societal pressure when grappling with racist and prejudicial attitudes.*

1. The fourth sentence describes the essay’s intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.

* Example: *The author uses an erudite yet defensive tone, indicating that he primarily addresses a rather literal intellectual audience.*

**Potential Columnists:**

The New York Times Stanley Fish

The New York Times David Leonhardt

The Washington Post Ann Coulter

The Washington Post Michelle Singletary

Townhall Thomas Sowell

The Daily Telegraph Peggy Noonan

Maclean’s David Horowitz

The Economist Maureen Dowd

Time Noam Chomsky

Newsweek Paul Krugman

The New Republic Thomas Friedman

National Review David Brooks

The New Yorker David Broder

Atlantic Monthly George Will

The Washington Post Fareed Zakaria

* [Mitch Albom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitch_Albom) (1958– ), *Detroit Free Press*
* [Russell Baker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russell_Baker) (1925– ), *New York Times*
* [Mike Barnicle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Barnicle) (1943– ), *Boston Herald*
* [Dave Barry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dave_Barry) (1947– ), *Miami Herald*
* [David Brooks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Brooks_(journalist)) (1961– ), *The New York Times*
* [Rosa Brooks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_Brooks) (1970– ), *Los Angeles Times*
* [Scott Burns](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scott_Burns_(newspaper_columnist)), Universal Press Syndicate and *Dallas Morning News*
* [Wilson Casey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilson_Casey) (1954– ), *Spartanburg, South Carolina Herald-Journal*, King Features Weekly Syndicate
* [Mona Charen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mona_Charen) (1957– ), Creators Syndicate
* [Richard Cohen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Cohen_(columnist)), *Washington Post*
* [Gail Collins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gail_Collins) (1945– ), *New York Times*
* [Ann Coulter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ann_Coulter) (1961– ), Universal Press Syndicate
* [E. J. Dionne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E._J._Dionne) (1952– ), *Washington Post*
* [Maureen Dowd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maureen_Dowd) (1952– ), *New York Times*
* [Mike Downey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Downey) (1951– ), *Los Angeles Times*, [*Chicago Tribune*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago_Tribune)
* [Tina Dupuy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tina_Dupuy) (1978– ), *Cagle Cartoons*
* [Mike Freeman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Freeman_(columnist)), *The Indianapolis Star*
* [Thomas Friedman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Friedman) (1953– ), *New York Times*
* [Jonah Goldberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonah_Goldberg) (1969– ), *USA Today*, *Los Angeles Times*, Tribune Media Services
* [Ray Hanania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ray_Hanania) (1953– ), *Daily Southtown*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Southwest News Newspaper Group*, *Arab News*, [*Jerusalem Post*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerusalem_Post)
* [Victor Davis Hanson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victor_Davis_Hanson) (1953– ), Tribune Media Services
* [Froma Harrop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Froma_Harrop) (1950– ), Creators Syndicate
* [Carolyn Hax](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carolyn_Hax) (1966– ), *Washington Post*
* [Carl Hiaasen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Hiaasen) (1943– ), *Miami Herald*
* [Jeff Jacoby](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeff_Jacoby_(columnist)) (1969– ), *Boston Globe*
* [Michael Kinsley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Kinsley) (1951– ), *Washington Post*
* [Charles Krauthammer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Krauthammer) (1950– ), *Washington Post*
* [Nicholas Kristof](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_Kristof) (1959– ), *New York Times*
* [Paul Krugman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Krugman) (1953– ), *New York Times*
* [Al Lewis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Lewis_(columnist)) (1961– ), Dow Jones Newswires
* [Steve Lopez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Lopez) (1953– ), *Los Angeles Times*
* [Charlie Madigan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Madigan) (1949– ), *Chicago Tribune*
* [Michelle Malkin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelle_Malkin) (1970– ), *Los Angeles Daily News]*, *Seattle Times*, *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Creators Syndicate
* [Tom Meek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Meek) (1956– ), *Gainesville Sun*
* [Harold Meyerson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_Meyerson) (1950– ), *Washington Post*
* [Jeffrey Morgan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeffrey_Morgan_(writer)) (19??– ), *Metro Times*
* [Patt Morrison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patt_Morrison), *Los Angeles Times*
* [Al Neuharth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Neuharth) (1924– ), *USA Today*
* [Clarence Page](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence_Page) (1947– ), *Chicago Tribune*
* [Kathleen Parker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kathleen_Parker) (1952– ), Washington Post Writers Group
* [Jeanne Phillips](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeanne_Phillips) (Abigail van Buren or Dear Abby), (1945– ), Universal Press Syndicate
* [Leonard Pitts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonard_Pitts) (1957– ), *Miami Herald*
* [Bill Plaschke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Plaschke) (1958–), *Los Angeles Times*
* [Dennis Prager](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis_Prager) (1948– ), Creators Syndicate
* [Ted Rall](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ted_Rall) (1963– ), San Francisco [Chronicle Features](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronicle_Features), Universal Press Syndicate
* [Michael Reagan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Reagan) (1945– ), Cagle Cartoons
* [Eugene Robinson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugene_Robinson) (1954– ), *Washington Post*
* [Neal Rubin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neal_Rubin) (1955–), *Detroit News*
* [Mary Schmich](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Schmich) (1953– ), *Chicago Tribune*
* [Ben Shapiro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben_Shapiro) (1984- ), *Patriot Post*
* [Thomas Sowell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Sowell) (1930– ), Creators Syndicate
* [Ellie Tesher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellie_Tesher) (19??– ), *Toronto Star*
* [Cal Thomas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cal_Thomas) (19??– ), Tribune Media Services
* [Peter Vecsey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Vecsey_(sports_columnist)) (1943–), *New York Post*
* [Gene Weingarten](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene_Weingarten) (1951–), *Washington Post*
* [George Will](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Will) (1941– ), Washington Post Writers Group
* [Walter E. Williams](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_E._Williams) (1936-), Creators Syndicate
* [Craig Wilson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Craig_Wilson_(columnist)), *Saratogian*, *USA Today*
* [Barbara Amiel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_Amiel) (1940– ), *Toronto Sun*, *The Times*, *Sunday Times*, *Daily Telegraph*
* [Bruce Anderson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruce_Anderson_(columnist)), *The Independent*
* [Terence Blacker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terence_Blacker) (1948– ), *The Independent*
* [Russell Brand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russell_Brand) (1975– ), *The Guardian*
* [Jeremy Clarkson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeremy_Clarkson) (1960– ), *The Sunday Times* and *The Sun*
* [Robert Crampton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Crampton) (1964– ), *The Times*
* [Nigel Dempster](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigel_Dempster) (1941–2007), *Daily Express*, *Daily Mail* and *Private Eye*
* [Tom Driberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Driberg) (1905–1976), *Daily Express* and *Reynolds News*
* [Tony Forrester](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony_Forrester) (1953– ), *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Sunday Telegraph*
* [Jonathan Freedland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_Freedland) (1967– ), *The Guardian*, *Jewish Chronicle*, *The Daily Mirror*, *London Evening Standard*
* [A. A. Gill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A._A._Gill) (1954–2016), *The Sunday Times*
* [Simon Heffer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simon_Heffer) (1960– ), *Daily Mail*, *The Daily Telegraph*
* [Peter Hitchens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Hitchens) (1951– ), *Daily Express*, *The Mail on Sunday*
* [Simon Jenkins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simon_Jenkins) (1943– ), *The Sunday Times*, *The Guardian*, *Evening Standard*
* [Bernard Levin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bernard_Levin) (1928–2004), *The Times*
* [Richard Littlejohn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Littlejohn) (1954– ), *The Sun* and *Daily Mail*
* [George Monbiot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Monbiot) (1963– ), *The Guardian*
* [Matthew Parris](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Parris) (1949– ), *The Times*
* [David Rennie](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Rennie_(columnist)) (1971–), *Evening Standard*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Economist*
* [Joan Smith](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan_Smith_(novelist_and_journalist)) (1953– ), *The Guardian*
* [Mark Steel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Steel) (1960– ), *The Guardian*, *The Independent*
* [Jack Trevor Story](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_Trevor_Story) (1917–1991), *The Guardian*
* [Andrew Sullivan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Sullivan) (1963– ), *The Sunday Times*
* [Tom Townsend](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Townsend) (1971– ), *The Daily Telegraph*
* [Polly Toynbee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polly_Toynbee) (1946– ), *The Independent*, *The Guardian*
* [Hugo Young](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugo_Young) (1937-2003), The Sunday Times, The Guardian
* [Barbara Amiel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_Amiel) (1941– ), *Toronto Sun*, *The Times*, *Sunday Times*, *Daily Telegraph*
* [Christie Blatchford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christie_Blatchford) (1951– ), *National Post*
* [Andrew Coyne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Coyne) (1960– ), *Financial Post*, *National Post*, *The Globe and Mail*, CanWest News Service
* [John Doyle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Doyle_(critic)) (1957– ), *The Globe and Mail*
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* [Marcus Gee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Gee) *The Globe and Mail*
* [Chantal Hébert](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chantal_H%C3%A9bert) (1954– ), *Toronto Star*
* [Michele Landsberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michele_Landsberg) (1935– ), *Toronto Star]*
* [Heather Mallick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heather_Mallick) (1959– ), *Toronto Sun*, *Toronto Star*, *The Globe and Mail*
* [Lawrence Martin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_Martin_(journalist)) (1948– ), *The Globe and Mail*
* [Don Macpherson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don_Macpherson_(journalist)) (1947-), *Montreal Gazette*
* [Rex Murphy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rex_Murphy) (1947– ), *The Globe and Mail*, National Post
* [Doug Saunders](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doug_Saunders) (1967– ), *The Globe and Mail*
* [Jeffrey Simpson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeffrey_Simpson) (1949– ), *The Globe and Mail*
* [Mark Steyn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Steyn) (1959– ), *The Spectator*, *Daily Telegraph*
* [Ellie Tesher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellie_Tesher) (19??– ), *Toronto Star*, *Chicago Sun-Times*
* [Margaret Wente](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margaret_Wente) (1950– ), *The Globe and Mail*