

## Section II: Free-Response

### Synthesis (Free-Response Question 1 on the AP Exam)

As the Internet age changes what and how people read, there has been considerable debate about the future of public libraries. While some commentators question whether libraries can stay relevant, others see new possibilities for libraries in the changing dynamics of today's society.

Carefully read the [six sources](#), found on the AP English Language and Composition Classroom Resources Page, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the role, if any, that public libraries should serve in the future.

Source A (Kranich)

Source B (calendar)

Source C (Shank)

Source D (charts)

Source E (Siegler)

Source F (ALA)

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that may establish a line of reasoning.
- Provide evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support your thesis. Indicate clearly the sources used through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. Sources may be cited as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the description in parentheses.
- Explain the relationship between the evidence and your thesis.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

### Rhetorical Analysis (Free-Response Question 2 on the AP Exam)

In May 2012 former United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who was the first African American woman to hold that position, gave a commencement speech to the graduating class of Southern Methodist University, a private university in Dallas, Texas. The passage below is an excerpt from that speech. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Rice makes to convey her message to her audience.

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 develop and support your line of reasoning.
- Explain the relationship between the evidence and your thesis.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

[W]hat do I mean by human progress? I believe that all human beings share certain fundamental aspirations. They want protections for their lives and their liberties. They want to think freely and to worship as they wish. They want opportunities to educate their children, both boys and girls. And they want the dignity that comes with having to be asked for their consent to be governed.

All too often, difference has been used to divide and dehumanize. I grew up in Birmingham, Alabama—a place quite properly called the most segregated city in America—and I know how it feels to hold aspirations when half your neighbors think that you're incapable of or uninterested in anything higher. And I know there are some in this audience who have perhaps faced the same.

And in my professional life, I have listened in disbelief as it has been said of men and women in Asia and Africa and Latin America and Eastern Europe and Russia, from time to time, that they did not share the basic aspirations of all human beings. Somehow these people were just “different.” That meant “unworthy of what we enjoy.” “Maybe they're just not ready for democracy,” it would be said. But of course this was once said even about black people. We were just too childlike. We didn't care about rights or citizenship or the vote. We didn't care about freedom and liberty.

Well, today in the Middle East, the last bastion of that argument, people are putting a nail in the coffin of that idea. They are not just seeking their freedom, they are seizing it. But freedom and democracy are not the same thing. Freedom and rights have to be institutionalized into rule of law, into constitutions. And if you don't think constitutions matter, just remember this: When Martin Luther King Jr. wanted to say that segregation was wrong, in my hometown of Birmingham, he didn't have to say that the United States had to be something else—only that the United States had to be what it said it was. That is why the creed matters.

But stable democracy requires more than just the institutionalization of freedom. It requires that there can be no tyranny of the majority. And most importantly, it requires that the strong cannot exploit the weak. Indeed, democracy is only as strong as its weakest link. And indeed, if every life is equal before the law, and within the eyes of God, then every life is worthy. Every life is capable of greatness. And it truly doesn't matter where you came from, it matters where you are going.

At SMU, you have been taught the importance of service. You have been taught to serve those who are less fortunate. And yes, it will help them, but it will help you more. Because when you encounter those who are less fortunate, you cannot possibly give way to aggrievement—“Why do I not have?”—or its twin brother, entitlement—“Why don't they give me?” In fact, you will ask instead, not “Why do I not have?” but “Why have I been given so much?” And from that spirit, you will join the legions of impatient patriots and optimists who are working toward a better human future. And yes, sometimes it seems very hard indeed. But always remember in those times of trial, that what seems impossible seems inevitable in retrospect.

I read one summer the biographies of the Founding Fathers, when things weren't going very well for us in the Bush Administration.\* And by all rights, the United States of America should actually never have come into being—what with a third of George Washington's troops down with smallpox on any given day, the Founding Fathers squabbling among themselves, and against the greatest military power of the time—but we did come into being.

And then we fought a civil war, brother against brother, hundreds of thousands dead on both sides—and yet we emerged a more perfect Union.

And those of us who live in the West and have ever come across the Continental Divide know that they did it in covered wagons. And they had to be optimists, because they didn't even know what was on the other side and they kept going anyway.

And in Birmingham, Alabama, a little girl whose parents can't take her to a movie theater or to a restaurant—her parents nonetheless have her convinced that she may not be able to have a hamburger at Woolworth's lunch counter, but she can be president of the United States if she wanted to be, and she becomes the Secretary of State. You see, things that seem impossible very often seem inevitable in retrospect.

\*Rice was Secretary of State from 2005 to 2009 under George W. Bush.

### **Argument (Free-Response Question 3 on the AP Exam)**

The late Barbara Jordan, a former United States representative, once warned, “[T]his is the great danger America faces—that we will cease to be one nation and become instead a collection of interest groups: city against suburb, region against region, individual against individual; each seeking to satisfy private wants.”

**Write an essay that argues your position on Jordan's claim that “private wants” threaten national identity.**

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that may establish a line of reasoning.
- Select and use evidence to develop and support your line of reasoning.
- Explain the relationship between the evidence and your thesis.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.