

AP ENGLISH Language and Composition EXAM

An Overview

Test Format

SECTION ONE

- Multiple Choice
- 60 Minutes
- 50-60 Questions
- 45% of your total score

SECTION TWO

- THREE Essay Responses
- 120 minutes
- Analysis = 40 minutes
- Synthesis = 40 minutes
- Argument = 40 minutes
- 55 % of your total score

Overall Scoring

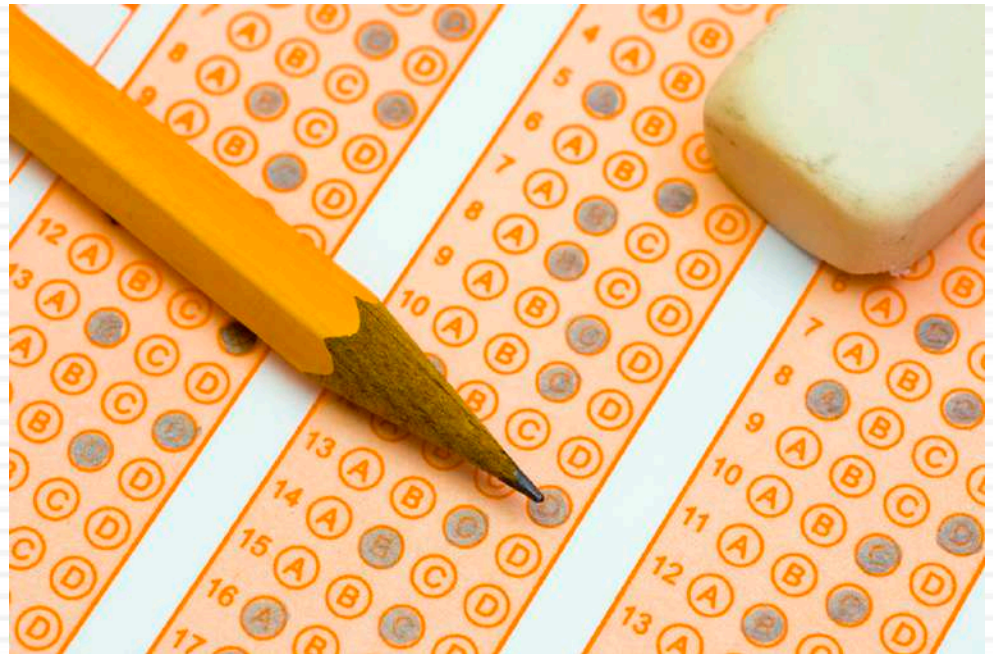
- 5 = exceptionally qualified (college credit likely)
- 4 = well-qualified (college credit probable)
- 3 = qualified (college credit possible)
- 2 = possibly qualified (college credit unlikely)
- 1 = not qualified (college credit not possible)

NOTE: If you are concerned, check with individual colleges to confirm acceptability.



Section One

Multiple Choice



Section One Reading Passages

Four passages of nonfiction

- an excerpt from a 17th-19th British writer
- a passage written by an American author from a particular ethnic background
- a nonfiction passage that includes footnotes
- a contemporary (last 50 yrs) excerpt of nonfiction

Reasons to Annotate

- Not possible to remember everything from one reading
- To avoid wasting valuable time going over the passage repeatedly
- Helps you keep your concentration
- Notes make it easier to work through the multiple choice questions

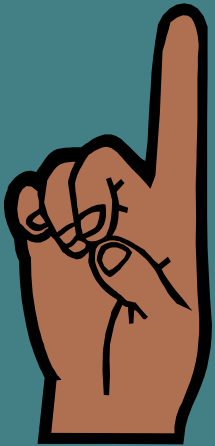


ANNOTATION:

To engage in a written dialogue with the text

What to Annotate in Section One

YOU
SHOULD
ALSO
ANNOTATE
THE ANSWER
CHOICES.



- ✓ Identify any clear statement of the argument or thesis.
- ✓ For each and every point, identify the *kind* of argument .
- ✓ Identify any figurative language.
- ✓ Mark any shifts in point of view or tone.
- ✓ If you find parallel syntax, note it.
- ✓ Underline unfamiliar vocabulary and use context clues to write a meaning in the margins.
- ✓ Recognize any bold claims or obviously false arguments.

Timing Strategies for Section One

- You should try to spend no more than 5 minutes reading and annotating a passage.
- That leaves you approximately 10 minutes to answer between 10-15 questions about that passage.



- 4 passages x 15 minutes each = 60 minutes

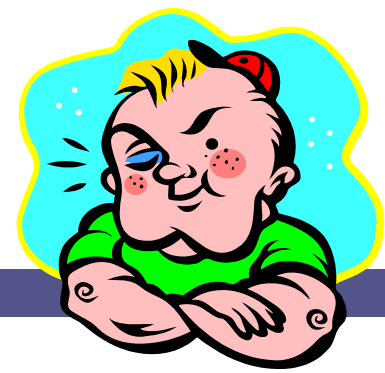
General Advice for Section One

- Remember that test makers designed this test to be challenging.
- You can pass this section of the test by getting roughly 50 percent of these questions correct.
- NEW for 2011**: NO points will be deducted for each incorrect answers.
- You lose the chance to earn a point for skipping an answer, like the SAT.
- If you can eliminate two choices, you are better to guess than leave an item blank.

More General Advice—Section One

- The multiple choice questions are NOT arranged from easiest to hardest.
 - ▣ There are often several questions that deal with the passage as a whole.
 - ▣ The rest are specific line or paragraph questions.
- Generally they are arranged sequentially.
 - ▣ From the beginning of the passage
 - ▣ To the end of the passage
- Don't get discouraged! A challenging question could likely be followed by an easier one. **BE CONFIDENT!!!!**

Attacking the Questions



- The AP exam is a contest of intellect and stamina. Do not let the questions come to you—GO AFTER THEM!
- Succeeding on this test has a great deal to do with attitude!
- You cannot be arrogant, but you must feel that you are intellectually capable of handling the test.

Section Two

Essays



How Essays are Scored

- Essays are scored 0-9.
- Scores of 4-1 are considered weaker to unacceptable essays.
- Scores of 5-9 are considered acceptable to excellent essays.



General Information-Section Two

- At first, you receive only a green booklet.
 - You will get 15 minutes to read and annotate the material in this booklet.



- Then, you will be given a pink booklet.
 - You then have two hours to write three essays.

What Scorers Look for in an Essay

THREE MAJOR ELEMENTS

- Does the student answer the question?
- Does the writer's point remain clear?
- Does the student use examples effectively?

What Scorers Look for in an Essay

OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Grammar

- Perfection is not expected.
- Errors cannot, however, compromise overall readability.
- Scorers acknowledge it as a rough draft.

Voice

- Have your own style, but don't become overly fixated on the beauty of your prose.
- Scorers are drawn to essays that are not only grammatically correct and to the point but that don't read like all the rest.

What Scorers Look for in an Essay

MORE ABOUT GRAMMAR

- When responding to the prompts, show your understanding of syntax by using some of the following terminology in your own responses.



Sentence Types

□ Simple

- Needs a subject and a verb
- EX: Carly and Rick waited for the bus.

□ Compound

- Uses a conjunction to connect two simple sentences.
- EX: Carly and Rick waited for the bus, but the bus never came for them.

Sentence Types

□ Complex

- Contains an independent clause and at least one dependent clause
- EX: While Carly and Rick waited for the bus, they decided to play a game of cards.

□ Periodic

- The main clause is withheld until the end of the sentence
- EX: A harmful economic system develops when a worker cannot get a job that pays enough to support a family.

Parts of Speech

Noun

- Describes a person, place, thing or idea
- EX: Sadness crept its way into her bleeding heart.

Verb

- Shows action or condition about a noun
- EX: Sadness crept its way into her bleeding heart.
- EX: The winter seems harsher than usual.

Pronoun

- Replaces a noun
- EX: While Carly and Rick waited for the bus, they decided to play a game of cards.

Adjective

- Makes a noun more specific
- Answers...what kind? How many? Which one? How much?
- EX: Sadness crept its way into her bleeding heart.

Parts of Speech

□ Adverb

- Makes verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs more specific
- Answers...Where? When? How? To what extent?
- EX: The fish swam quite rapidly.
- EX: Then I decided to quit my job.

□ Preposition

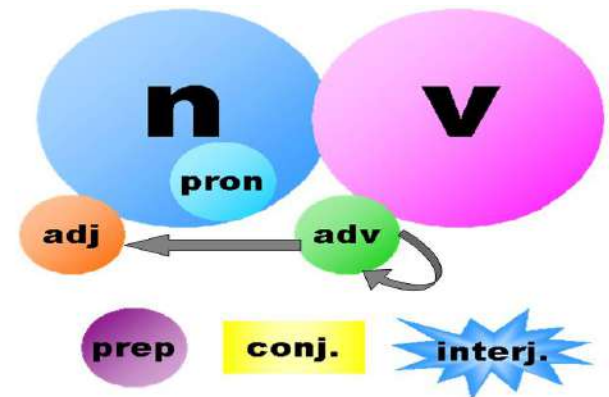
- Words that begin a phrase that ends in a noun or pronoun but are neither subjects or verbs
- EX: We saw a squirrel in the park.

□ Conjunction

- Connects words, phrases and clauses
- EX: He met me at work because I forgot my keys.

□ Interjection

- Shows emotion and is separate from the sentence
- EX: No, I do not want to go with you to the prom.



Basic Sentence Parts

SUBJECT

- A complete subject includes:
 - ▣ A noun or pronoun that the sentence is about

PREDICATE

- A complete predicate includes:
 - ▣ A verb or verb phrase that tells something about the complete subject

EXAMPLE: The three clowns in the ring | tumbled around the arena.
complete subject | **complete predicate**

Basic Sentence Parts

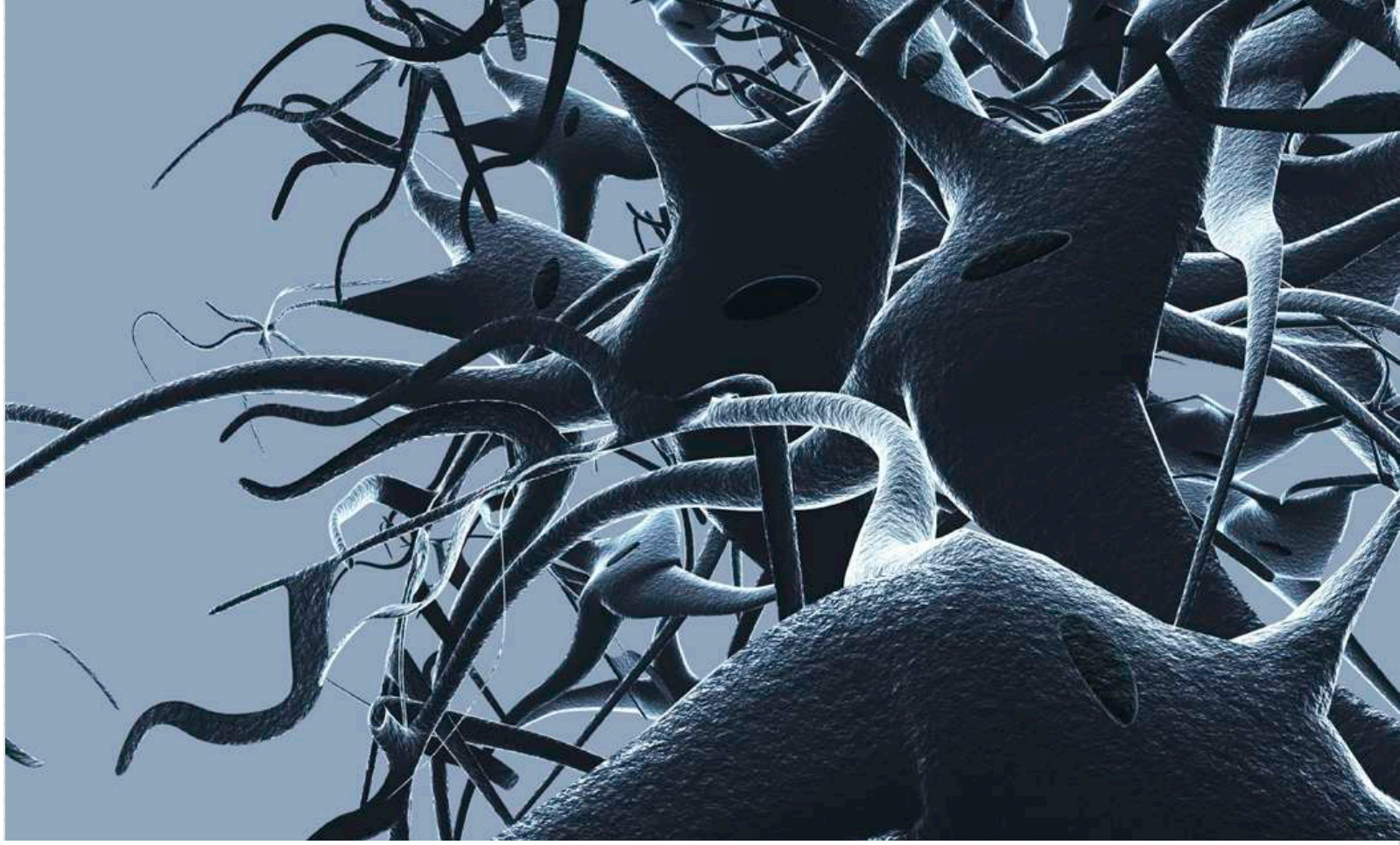
PHRASES

- A group of words, without a subject or verb, that functions in the sentence as one part of speech

CLAUSES (DEPENDENT)

- A group of words with its own subject and verb but cannot function as a sentence

EXAMPLE: *Unless the rain stops soon,* the rivers will flood *into the roads.*
dependent clause phrase



THE SYNTHESIS ESSAY

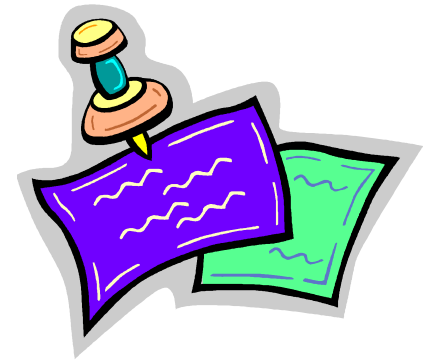
Purposes of the Synthesis Essay

- To ensure that you are able to present and support an argument.
- To examine your ability to consider and support a rational argument
- To evaluate your ability to absorb, understand, and employ several sources on the same topic



Recommendations

- Use your 15 minute reading and annotation period to prepare to write THIS essay.
 - Do what the prompt asks you to do.
 - Present your own opinion.
-
- QUOTE OR PARAPHRASE AT LEAST THREE SEPARATE SOURCES IN YOUR ESSAY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



The Initial Question Page

THREE SECTIONS

DIRECTIONS

You will find a crucial sentence:

“Your argument should be central; the sources should support this argument. Avoid merely summarizing.”

INTRODUCTION

- Its purpose is to get you thinking about the issue.
- This material is **NOT** the prompt.
- DO NOT** address an idea presented in the introductory material if it is not central to the assignment.

ASSIGNMENT

THIS IS THE PROMPT!!!!

It is highlighted in bold type.

In this section, you are specifically instructed to “synthesize as least three sources for support.”

Questions to Ask Yourself

- As you read the sources for the synthesis essay, ask yourself the following questions:
 - ▣ Is the source biased?
 - ▣ Does the source's date of publication have an effect on the relevance of the argument?
 - ▣ What position (pro/con/neutral) does the author hold?
 - ▣ For what audience is the author writing?

Annotation of the Synthesis Sources

You should critically annotate the passages by identifying:

the point of
view or thesis of
the sources

any “quotables”
(particularly
succinct phrases
you may use)

the need to
reference the
visual
(or not)

Using Multiple Sources

Using Enough Passages

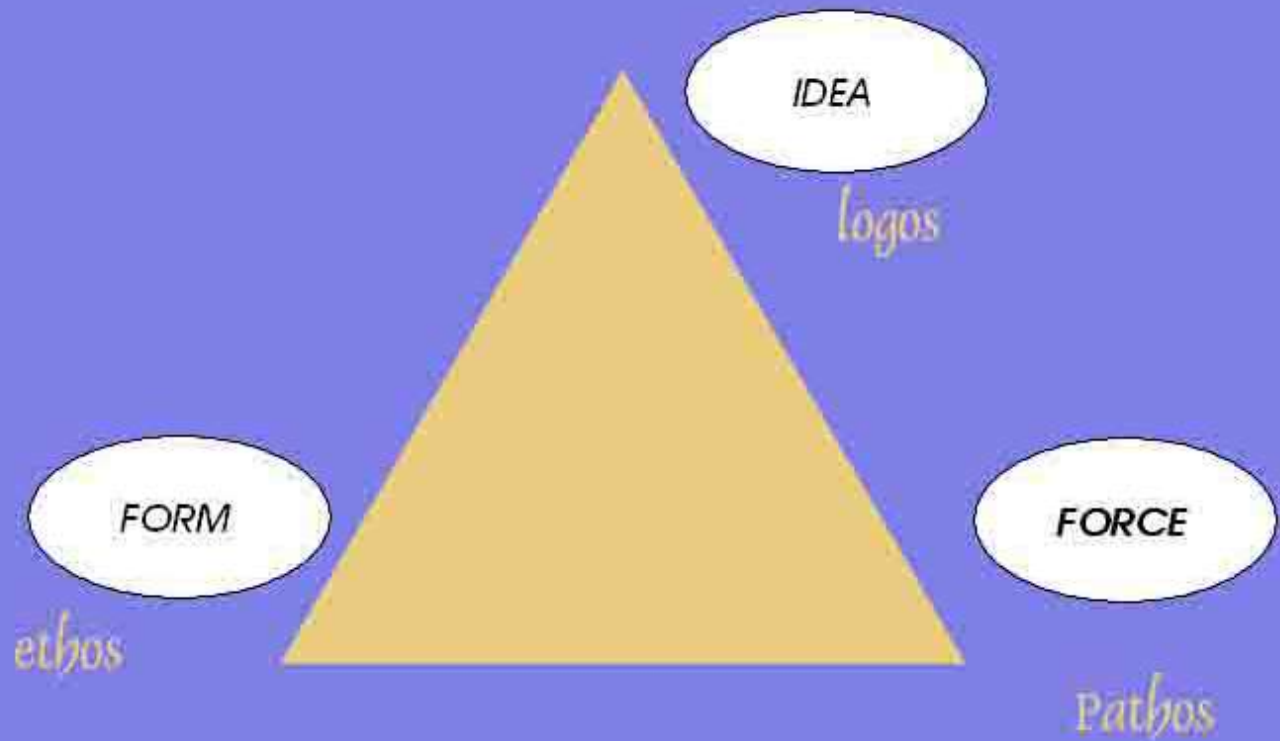
- Time is of the essence—do not feel the need to use ALL of the sources (or even more than three).

Using Opposing Passages

- It can be an effective strategy to strengthen your own argument.
- Don't avoid these sources just because they do not overtly support your opinion. **DISPROVE THEM.**

NOTE: You may use more than three sources.

NOTE: You may use the same source more than once.



THE RHETORICAL ANALYSIS ESSAY

Purpose of the Rhetorical Analysis Essay

To analyze the methods the author employs in his or her writing to convey the author's attitude, opinion, or conviction about some topic.



The DOs and DON'Ts

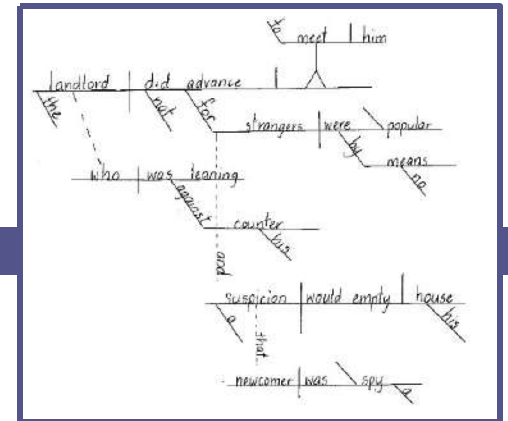
What NOT to Do

- ✗ address the author by his/her first name
- ✗ use fancy language
- ✗ write a “hokey” review
 - ✗ It's good. 😊
 - ✗ It's bad. ☹️

What to DO Instead

- ✓ Remember to identify and explain specific strategies employed by the author
- ✓ Use textual evidence to support your analysis, not confirm your summary

Chief Areas to Analyze



Diction

- Notice author's word choice, especially connotation

Syntax

- Dissect the sentence structures, parallelism, questions, and repetition

Figures of Speech

- Recognize the metaphors, allusions, imagery, etc.
- More important, explain their function in the passage for the reader

Rhetoric

Rhetoric, an acronym of strategies

P-----E-----L-----I-----D-----S

P is for PATHOS—direct appeal to emotions

E is for ETHOS—an argument about credibility

L is for LOGOS—a rational and reasonable argument

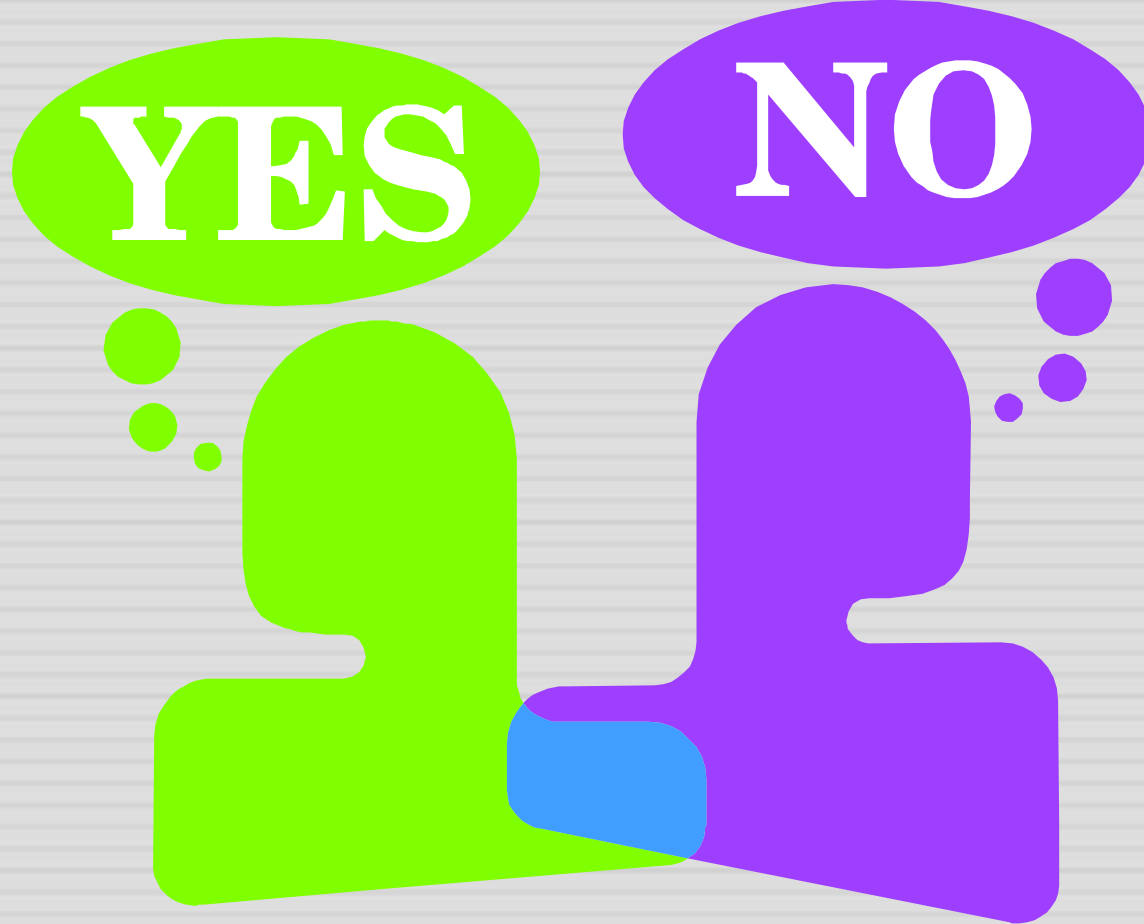
I is for INDUCTIVE—logos that is based on examples

D is for DEDUCTIVE—logos based on assumed truths

S is for SYLLOGISM—type of deductive argument that provides two claims and then offers a conclusion

Reminders about Rhetorical Analysis

- It is probably the essay most UNLIKE the writing you find to be natural.
- It is more natural to engage in debate than to analyze the truth or effectiveness of an argument.
- Take the time to closely read the material and consider the persuasive purpose and how it is achieved.



GENERAL ARGUMENT ESSAY

The Basics of the Third Essay

- Designed as a “contemporary issues” question
- Really is more like a “values” question
- Fundamental issues inherent to this type of question are:
 - What are your values?
 - What do you think our society should value?
 - What should a moral, thoughtful and reflective society consider its most important strengths?

The Prompt



This is
considered
the easiest
of the
essays to
write. 😊

- The prompt is set up by a brief excerpt.
 - Could be as long as half a page
 - Could be as brief as two lines
- An opinion is offered in the passage.
- You are asked to agree, disagree, or qualify that opinion based on your own experiences and/or reading.

Three-Step Process

Step 1

- Read and understand the claim
- Restate claim in your own words

Step 2

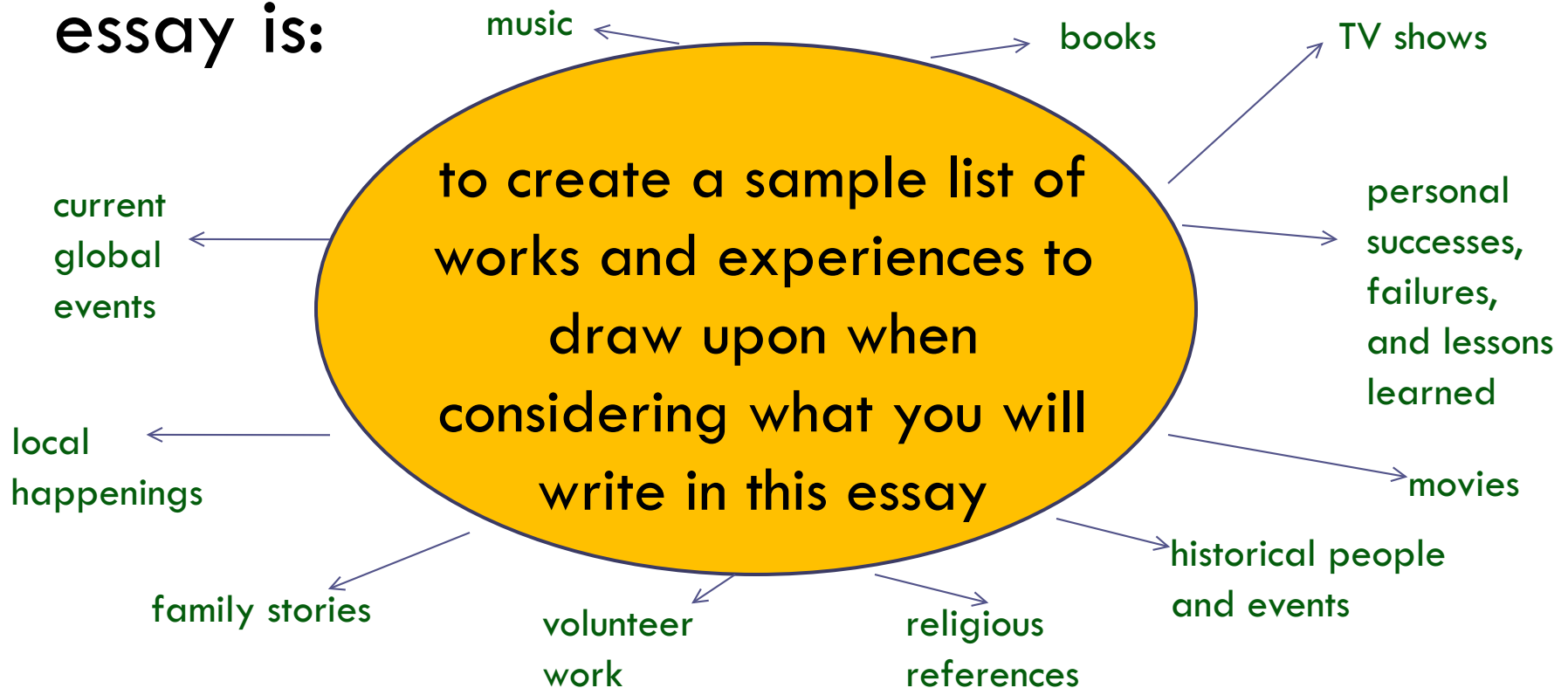
- Jot down your immediate reactions
- Write if you are for it, against it, ambivalent
- Create a brief outline of why

Step 3

- Make a list of viable, thoughtful examples
- Choose examples that can help you illustrate *your argument*

Preparation

One proactive step you can take to ensure success in writing the general argument essay is:



Final Reminders

- Don't forget to write in the present tense.
- Underline titles.
- Pay attention to proper capitalization.
- Always consider point of view and audience.
- Don't just identify/label devices. Explain their functions.
- Responses must be multi-paragraphed.
- Never skip the conclusion. Budget your time!