



AP English Language and Composition Study Guide

Are you preparing for the AP English Language and Composition exam? This study guide covers exam basics, what's covered on the exam, and how to prepare for the exam.



To access practice tests, check out [Peterson's AP English Language and Composition test prep](#).

Exam Basics



- **Test time:** 3 hours, 15 minutes
- **Section I of the exam:** 45 multiple-choice questions; 45% exam weighting; 60 minutes to complete.
- **Section II of the exam:** 3 free-response questions; 55% exam weighting; 135 minutes (including one 15-minute reading period) to complete. It's recommended to spend 40 minutes per essay.

The exam assesses the following content:

1. Rhetorical situation
2. Claims and evidence
3. Reasoning and organization
4. Style



What's on the English Language and Composition Exam?



Rhetorical Situation - Reading

- Identifying the purpose and intended audience of a text
- Examining how evidence supports a claim
- Developing paragraphs as part of an effective argument



Rhetorical Situation - Writing

- Analyzing audience and its relationship to the purpose of an argument
- Building an argument with relevant and strategic evidence
- Developing thesis statements
- Developing structure and integrating evidence to reflect a line of reasoning

Claims and Evidence - Reading

- Identifying and describing different claims or lines of reasoning
- Identifying and avoiding flawed lines of reasoning
- Introducing and integrating sources and evidence
- Using sufficient evidence for an argument
- Attributing and citing references
- Developing parts of a text with cause-effect and narrative methods

Claims and Evidence - Writing

- Developing and connecting thesis statements and lines of reasoning
- Developing introductions and conclusions
- Developing parts of a text with comparison-contrast and definition-description methods

Reasoning and Organizing - Reading

- Developing commentary throughout paragraphs
- Maintaining ideas throughout an argument
- Using modifiers to qualify an argument and convey perspective
- Using transitions

Reasoning and Organizing - Writing

- Incorporating multiple perspectives strategically into an argument
- Recognizing and accounting for bias
- Adjusting an argument to address new evidence
- Analyzing tone and shifts in tone

Style - Reading

- Examining complexities in issues
- Considering how words, phrases, and clauses can modify and limit an argument
- Examining how counterargument or alternative perspectives affect an argument
- Exploring how sentence development affects an argument

Style - Writing

- Choosing comparisons based on an audience
- Considering how sentence development and word choice affect how the writer is perceived by an audience
- Considering how all choices made in an argument affect the audience
- Considering how style affects an argument

Preparing for the AP English Language and Composition Exam

Make a study plan



Creating a study plan can help guide you in the right direction to ensure success on the AP English Language and Composition exam.

Determine how much time you have before the exam and how much time you can devote to prepare for the exam. Answering these questions will help you set a pace for your review.

Take a diagnostic test



The diagnostic test will help you identify your weak spots in the course. Based on the results of the test, plan your study time to address the areas where you need improvement.

Take practice tests



Completing practice tests will help you maintain pacing, and in understanding and answering multiple-choice question, and practice in writing timed questions.

Pacing is important! Work quickly and carefully throughout the test. Answer as many questions as you can as quickly as you can, and then go back and try to fill in the others.



Complete assignments



Complete all assignments for your regular AP English Language and Composition class. The test is designed to measure your development and understanding of English and composition.

Test Prep



To help you prepare for the AP English Language and Composition exam, check out Peterson's [AP English Language and Composition test prep course](#), which includes two full-length practice tests, self-learning skills, and strategies.

Tip

In the free-response sections, be neat, thorough, and very clear. You don't want those scoring your exam to guess what you wrote or what you meant.