

Hello AP Language and Composition students!

Is everyone surviving? Granted, these are some unique times we are living in, but they ultimately define us. All of you know that we can't hold you responsible for turning in assignments over this time (except for the essay that was done in class Friday, March 13th, the typed essay that was due that date and all assignments prior to that), and all of you know that the AP Exams are going to be insanely different this year, but Mrs. Hipp and I have been keeping up with College Board information, and one article we read explained that students will be able to photograph written work for the 45 minute exam, but **what that written work will consist of is still a mystery.**

Granted, this course must be drastically modified, but that **does not mean I will accept you being less prepared for college.** Hence, we will continue working on argument essays. We will continue working on structuring them, addressing the counterclaim, and developing and elaborating on relevant evidence that focuses on the prompt. After a couple/few weeks of that, we will then move to synthesis essays (and return to MLA citations and overall MLA knowledge) mixing in various units that College Board says will be focused on in the exam, and then we will wrap it up with a return to rhetorical essay prompts that are more challenging than the ones that we did in first semester. Although all the lessons will be important, the following argument unit is especially critical because it ultimately includes synthesis/argument essay formatting/structuring, argumentative terminology and analyzing your own use of rhetoric when choosing your evidence.

So here's our first focus: Since we don't fully know what's coming at us on the exam, but we do know that it's better to be overprepared than utterly regretful, we will move forward and focus on all the above, and we will start by continuing where we left off (argument essays and Self-Reliance/rhetorical analysis). However, unlike any other time in my 20 years of teaching, I am going to write and then dissect an argument essay in a way that will prepare you for any argument or synthesis essay that comes your way, be it an AP Exam, the ACT, or any academic essay that demands you take a position. So, let's get busy. Let's work hard to make your college dreams, happen.

Here we go:

We're going to take an in depth look at the 2018 AP Exam's, Argument Essay. When you read the prompt, notice that the word "argument" isn't in the prompt (sometimes it is; sometimes it isn't); however, the word "position" is in the prompt. If a prompt asks you to "develop your position", obviously, there is another position; hence, it is an Argument Essay.

Prompt for the 2018 Argument Essay:

In her book *Gift from the Sea*, author and aviator Anne Morrow Lindbergh (1906-2001) writes, "We tend not to choose the unknown which might be a shock or a disappointment or simply a little difficult to cope with. And yet it is the unknown with all its disappointments and surprises that is the most enriching."

Consider the value Lindbergh places on choosing the unknown. Then write an essay in which you develop your own position on the value of exploring the unknown. Use appropriate, specific evidence to illustrate and develop your position.

You will soon be reading the example essay that I wrote for this prompt. Although I haven't written an example essay like this for students, these are unprecedented times; this being the case, I want absolutely no confusion as to what I am looking for in your argumentative essays. Use this example to format/structure your essays. Also, this would be a **high 6 on the rubric**, so, **study how I structure the argument**, the **words I use to transition from one side to the other**, and the **expansion of evidence and commentary**. Thankfully, if you were in class on our last Friday, not only did you turn in the typed essay that had you take a stand on which essay was more effective given its rhetorical strategies ("On Compassion" vs. "Homeless"), but you also experienced writing the "Good and Bad" essay in 45 minutes, so what is expected is nothing new, but since you haven't seen what a 6 looks like from in-class grading/anchors, it's only fair that you do.

Prompt Directions: I want you to reread the prompt from the 2018 AP Lang and Comp Exam (recopied below this paragraph), several times. Remember, you cannot choose to address half or even 75% of the prompt. That's like answering 10 or 15 questions on a difficult, 20 question multiple choice test and assuming you will receive a respectable grade. All the concepts must be addressed if you want a 5 or a 6.

So, read the following prompt, again, and then the essay. Highlight/take note of that which you think is important in the prompt. Then, while reading the essay, study on your own how it adheres to the prompt before looking to see how I dissect it for you.

Again, here's the prompt:

In her book *Gift from the Sea*, author and aviator Anne Morrow Lindbergh (1906-2001) writes, "We tend not to choose the unknown which might be a shock or a disappointment or simply a little difficult to cope with. And yet it is the unknown with all its disappointments and surprises that is the most enriching."

Consider the value Lindbergh places on choosing the unknown. Then write an essay in which you develop your own position on the value of exploring the unknown. Use appropriate, specific evidence to illustrate and develop your position.

Here's the essay:

Exploring the Unknown: Risk and Reward

One might argue that it is better to go through life alone than to risk the disappointment that some relationships may bring. After all, when one explores love, quite often the exploration leads to feelings that are unknown, feelings that can be unpredictable. Simply put, it is very difficult to know what the exploration of love will find. As Anne Lindbergh states, the unknown "might be a shock or a disappoint or simply a little difficult to cope with." Yet, she also discusses the "surprises" that come from this exploration and how it is the "unknown...that is the most enriching." Hence, although there are undeniable risks involved with exploring the unknown, be it the unknown depths of our hearts, the insecurities we may have, the mysterious world that surrounds us or the galaxies beyond our current reach, exploring the unknown is of extreme value if humanity is to flourish.

Exploring emotional unknowns when entering serious relationships, or handling every day, common insecurities like meeting new people, has its risks, yet the surprises and rewards that can come from exploring relationships outweigh the risks; in fact, they ultimately determine the success of a society. Granted, those that feel different have valid points: Regarding romantic love, one could argue that the emotional pain is intense when a relationship comes to an end. For months, even years, coping with damage from exploring the unknown may be difficult. The heart has been torn and the healing is slow. Nevertheless, if one is to flourish, one must learn how to face and overcome adversity. Obstacles are everywhere, but for those who are willing to hurdle the obstacles and risk the unknown, their rewards can be great: a loving family, a loving spouse, better chances of economic prosperity, perhaps even an enriched sense of purpose. And given that married parents have less need of financial aid than single parents, one's devotion to finding a loving, meaningful relationship, despite the risks of being hurt while exploring, isn't just beneficial to the individual, but to humanity as well. Yet, as important as the surprises brought by the pursuit of a loving relationship may be, being willing to explore new friendships when meeting new people is just as valuable. For instance, when a teacher announces that his or her students are going to have a seating-chart-change, and that they will have to move from those they have gotten to know, a few groans and complaints usually arise. True, their insecurities are understandable given the emotional risk involved with meeting someone new, someone that may or may not have preconceived notions of them, but with that risk comes the reward of new opinions being shared. Where one student was once the intellect of the group, he or she might not be the intellect in the new group. Though this may at first be risky and uncomfortable for the intellect given that he or she is now less confident with his or her abilities, if the intellect is open to another intellect's opinions, it could open both intellects to new ways of approaching a subject, thus benefitting mankind when the enhanced intellects create things that benefit humanity. Additionally, it teaches tolerance and acceptance given the constant diversity of opinions that circulate within the different groups, and though this might not lead to everyone becoming best friends or even good friends, it will lead to people better understanding people, and that, in itself, is extremely valuable if a society is to thrive. Hence, being willing to explore the unknown, such as the emotions involved in relationships, be they love or friendship, is of extreme value if humanity is to flourish, just as exploring the vast unknowns on our planet and beyond are extremely important for humanity to survive.

Whether it be the exploration of seas, tropical jungles or the galaxies beyond our current grasp, mankind should deeply value and support the exploration of the unknown if mankind is to succeed. Those feeling different could argue the disadvantages of such exploration, and their argument is

understandable. After all, ships have sunk while exploring the oceans, divers have been lost while exploring the depths of the sea, people have died from poisonous bites and parasitic infections while exploring the jungles and astronauts have met their demise while exploring space. Unarguably, there has been shock and disappointment in all these endeavors, and the families and countries that have lost these great explorers have mourned. Therefore, those who oppose taking such risks have valid concerns. Nevertheless, as our planet's population increases while its size remains the same, it is incumbent upon humanity to value the enrichment that can accompany exploration. After all, one never knows what surprises and benefits can be found at different depths of the ocean. Whether it be additional food sources for ever-increasing, human populations, or the exploration of oceanic currents that assist weather predictions such as rain and drought—thus allowing agriculture to adjust its planting decisions—exploring the unknown is beneficial to mankind. And one never knows when a plant or herb discovered in a tropical jungle might be the next big surprise that cures multiple sclerosis, cancer, migraine headaches, etc., just as one never knows if we might increase in population so much that our planet becomes strained beyond its ability to sustain human life. After all, what if our planet truly has limited resources? What if our greatest challenge for existence, despite the shock and disappointment along the way, is our ability to find additional planets that will sustain human life? All this being possible, the exploration of such unknowns might not just be important for our enrichment, but for our very survival as well.

The fear of exploring the unknown is understandable, but it is the drive to explore the unknown that defines, enriches, and continues our survival. For instance, scientists and doctors are currently exploring the origins, weaknesses and strengths of the Coronavirus. There has already been shock and disappointment as some of the explorers have become infected while doing their research; as a result, they must cope with the virus they are attempting to stop. Nevertheless, without their willingness to explore the unknown, society would be without a weapon to stop this invasion. We wouldn't know the best strategies to prevent the spread of this pandemic. Hence, those who explore should be cautious when exploring the unknown, but the exploration of the unknown is invaluable if humanity is to continue to flourish.

Now that you have read the prompt and essay on your own, read the prompt again and ask yourself if you recognized the same, bolded information as worthy of being mentioned and expanded upon.

In her book *Gift from the Sea*, author and aviator **Anne Morrow Lindbergh** (1906-2001) writes, "We tend **not to choose the unknown** which **might be a shock** or a **disappointment** or simply a **little difficult to cope with**. And yet it is **the unknown** with all its **disappointments** and **surprises** that is the **most enriching**."

Consider the **value** Lindbergh places on **choosing the unknown**. Then write an essay in which you develop **your own position** on the **value of exploring the unknown**. Use appropriate, specific evidence to illustrate and develop your position.

I will now break down the essay, paragraph by paragraph, sentence by sentence, and sometimes at the diction level so you know how to write a respectable, argument (and synthesis) essay. The words that are only bolded address the major aspects of the prompt as well as my position. The words that are ***bolded, italicized, & underlined*** are transitional words. USE TRANSITIONS WHEN NECESSARY. FEEL FREE TO PLAGIARIZE MY STYLE/TRANSITIONS AT WILL. CONFUSION KILLS IN ESSAYS, ESPECIALLY ARGUMENT ESSAYS. EFFECTIVE TRANSITIONS PREVENT CONFUSION. Also, remember that the 2018 prompt asks you/the writer to “develop your own position on the value of exploring the unknown”, so it expects you to personalize the topic a little. Lastly, italicized sections and various sentence numbers will be addressed after you reread each paragraph.

Introduction

The Big Picture: The first sentence or two introduces the prompt’s concept in a manner that relates to what the prompt is demanding. You can be a little creative here. (Strong Suggestion: Don’t use rhetorical questions to do this. It’s too early in your essay. If you really want to use a rhetorical question or two, there is an example at the bottom of body paragraph two.) After that, get more specific to the prompt’s focus, envisioning your thesis while you do, and making sure you are focused on the various words/phrases/concepts in the prompt that must shape/create your thesis. Make sure the first part of your thesis starts with “Although” or “While” so your reader is aware that there are different ways of looking at the issue, but make sure the second part of your thesis gives them your specific, assertive opinion about the topic. (Always maintain a respectful tone.)

Introduction: (1) *One might argue that it is better to go through life alone than to risk the disappointment that some relationships may bring.* (2) ***After all***, when one explores love, quite often the exploration leads to feelings that are unknown, feelings that can be unpredictable. (3) ***Simply put***, it is very difficult to know what the exploration of love will find. (4) ***As Anne Lindbergh states***, the unknown “might be a shock or a disappoint or simply a little difficult to cope with.” (5) ***Yet***, she also discusses the “surprises” that come from this exploration and how it is the “unknown...that is the most enriching.” (6) ***Hence***, although there are undeniable risks involved with exploring the unknown, be it the unknown depths of our hearts, the insecurities we may have, the mysterious world that surrounds us or the galaxies beyond our current reach, exploring the unknown is of extreme value if humanity is to flourish.

Bolded Words: The words that are only bolded are all focused on the words in the prompt as well as a few words/concepts from my thesis that will assist in creating the value I place on “exploring the unknown.”

Italicized, Underlined & Bolded: The *italicized*, underlined and **bolded** words are transitional words. Use them. Be a thief and steal all of them if you want. Perhaps you could come up with a couple of your own. Whatever the case, use them! Don’t confuse your reader. **Confusion kills.**

Sentences 1 & 2 are italicized because they work together to create a general scenario or topic that relates to the prompt. It does not have to be two sentences, but two sentences are plenty before getting more specific to the prompt. One sentence can work just as well.

Sentence 3 works as a transition to connect the scenario/topic directly to the prompt. Hence, the general scenario is getting more specific to the prompt. If you only needed a one sentence scenario/topic, this would be sentence 2.

Sentence 4 and 5 (or 3 and 4 or even 2 and 3) brings the prompt directly into the thesis. This communicates to the reader that you are specifically **adhering to the prompt from the outset of the essay. That's what you want.**

Sentence 6 (or sentence 4 or 5) is the thesis. It must start with the word Although or While. Notice, the word "Hence" comes before "although" in this example, but it doesn't have to. The word "hence" is used here because it links the previous sentence's concepts to the thesis. You determine if you need it or not. (The word Therefore can be replaced with Hence if you don't want to sound repetitive throughout the essay. Look for other transitions that I use to replace Hence and Therefore.) However, your thesis must first address the opposition's point of view before your own, and **your thesis must be specific with where you are going** (your position on the prompt). **Don't write** a thesis like, "*Although some people think blue is the most mysterious color, others believe that green is the most mysterious.*" A thesis like that is **utter garbage**. The reader becomes confused before the first body paragraph because the reader wasn't given a firm position and direction. The thesis must be specific and have some sort of opinion that guides your essay's focus. For example, a good example of the same thesis would be as follows: "*Although some people think blue is the most mysterious color, green is the most mysterious given its many variations in nature.*"

Body Paragraph 1

The Big Picture: The first sentence should immediately introduce **both sides** of the paragraph's focus and should be **precise to your thesis** (in idea). If you reread the thesis, you will see that the first two specific focuses mentioned are **unknown depths of our hearts** and **insecurities**. After that, **transition into the counterclaim**. Make sure it is **something specific, not a generalization**. **Very important note:** In both of my paragraphs, I use evidence that those arguing against me might use (their counterclaims) and immediately **refute** them after I respectfully give their side; I do this because it enhances my argument. However, you won't always be able to do this. In fact, quite often, in a timed essay, you won't be able to come up with perfect counterclaims that you can immediately refute. Quite often, the counterclaim will be unrelated to the evidence you use to support your position. Don't worry about that. If you are not able to refute the counterclaim in a manner that enhances your argument, don't. However, **better writers** are **sometimes** able to **do this**. Next, **transition to your position**. Use **very specific evidence, not generalizations**. **Generalizations are garbage** because they don't lead to insightful commentary. Read my commentary and **try to mimic how I expand on specific examples**. The concluding sentence should ONLY wrap up your position and send the reader to body paragraph two's focus. You have been fair by writing a couple sentences that address and expand on the counterclaim. That's enough. Lastly, and MOST IMPORTANTLY, make sure **your topic gets the majority of the focus/commentary**. The **first one third (1/3)** of the paragraph acknowledges the **opposition's point of view**; the **last two thirds (2/3)** is all about **your side**. And don't worry about the 12-14 sentence body paragraphs I wrote. If yours are 8-10 sentences, that should be enough to achieve the 1/3 to 2/3 rule if

you do it correctly. However, there are those students that do have the ability to reach this level and speed of writing, so they must be considered when I am writing an example for everyone.

Body Paragraph 1: (1) **Exploring emotional unknowns** when entering serious relationships, or handling every day, common **insecurities** like meeting new people, has its **risks**, yet the **surprises** and **rewards** that can come from **exploring relationships** outweigh the **risks**; ***in fact***, they ultimately determine the **success of a society**. (2) ***Granted***, those that feel different have ***valid*** points: ***Regarding*** romantic love, one could argue that the emotional pain is intense when a relationship comes to an end. (3) For months, even years, coping with damage from **exploring the unknown** can be difficult. (4) The heart has been torn and the healing is slow. (5) ***Nevertheless***, if one is to **flourish**, one must learn how to face and overcome adversity. (6) Obstacles are everywhere, but for those who are willing to hurdle the obstacles, their **rewards** can be great: a loving family, a loving spouse, better chances of economic prosperity, perhaps even an **enriched** sense of purpose. (7) ***And given that*** married parents have less need of financial aid than single parents, one's devotion to finding a loving, meaningful relationship, **despite the risks** of being hurt while **exploring**, isn't just beneficial to the individual, but to **humanity** as well. (8) ***Yet***, as important as the pursuit of a loving relationship may be, being willing to **explore new friendships** when meeting new people is just as **valuable**. (9) ***For instance***, when a teacher announces that his or her students are going to have a seating-chart-change, and that they will have to move from those they have gotten to know, a few groans and complaints usually arise. (10) ***True***, their **insecurities** are understandable given the **emotional risk** involved with meeting someone new, someone that may or may not have preconceived notions of them, but with that **risk** comes the **reward** of new opinions being shared. (11) Where one student was once the intellect of the group, he or she might not be the intellect in the new group. (12) ***Though this may*** at first be **risky** and uncomfortable for the intellect given that he or she is now less confident with his or her abilities, if the intellect is open to another intellect's opinions, it could open both intellects to new ways of approaching a subject, **thus benefitting mankind** when the enhanced intellects create things that **benefit humanity**. (13) ***Additionally***, it teaches **tolerance** and **acceptance** given the constant diversity of opinions that circulate within the different groups, and though this might not lead to everyone becoming best friends or even good friends, it will lead to people better understanding people, and that, in itself, is **extremely valuable if a society is to thrive**. (14) ***Hence***, being willing to **explore the unknown**, such as the emotions involved in relationships, be they love or friendship, is of **extreme value** if **humanity is to flourish**, ***just as*** exploring the vast **unknowns** on our **planet and beyond** are extremely important for **humanity to survive**.

Bolded Words: The words that are only **bolded** are all focused on the words in the prompt as well as a few words/concepts from my thesis that will assist in creating the value I place on "exploring the unknown."

Italicized, Underlined & Bolded: The ***italicized, underlined*** and ***bolded*** words are transitional words. Use them. Be a thief and steal all of them if you want. Perhaps you could come up with a couple of your own. Whatever the case, use them! Don't confuse your reader. **Confusion kills.**

SENTENCE 2/ADRESSING THE COUNTERCLAIM: Words like ***valid*** and ***understandable*** should be used when explaining the counterclaim's point. Do not use words like **good** or **great point**. Your job, when writing counterclaims, is to give specific examples and fairly explain them. Your job is not to make their argument for them.

Sentence 1 (TS) works to prepare the reader for both sides of the issue and gives a focus.

Sentences 2-4 (or 2-3) are critical **if you want to pass the argument essay and the synthesis essay**. When making an argument, you must address the arguments of those who might feel different. This is called the **counterclaim**. It **isn't an option**. It addresses the first part of your thesis. Without counterclaims you have written a persuasive essay, but that is not what the AP Exam requires. The AP Exam and the ACT demand that you write argument essays.

Sentence 5 avoids confusion. It makes it very clear that the writer is transitioning to his/her side of the argument. **It is critical**. Quite often, writers forget this sentence; as a result, the reader becomes confused, and **CONFUSION KILLS IN ARGUMENT/SYNTHESIS ESSAYS**.

Sentences 6-13 focus completely on the writer's position, and though the *italicized section* in both Sentence 10 and Sentence 12 briefly addresses the counterclaim, it is only used in a manner to reinforce the writer's side. It is optional, but in this case, I thought it enhanced the argument. Notice how I use it to transition back to additional evidence to support my side.

Sentence 14 only wraps up your side of the argument. You've addressed their argument sufficiently in the paragraph, so use the concluding sentence to wrap up your position and send the reader to the next paragraph's focus.

Body Paragraph 2

The Big Picture: The same as body paragraph 1's focus, but now it will be addressing the **mysterious world that surrounds us or the galaxies beyond our current reach** part of the prompt. The concluding sentence does not have to necessarily transition into the conclusion. Wrapping up your final thoughts on **the extreme value if humanity is to flourish** part of your thesis should transition easily enough to your conclusion's main focus.

Body Paragraph Two: (1) Whether it be the **exploration** of seas, tropical jungles or the galaxies beyond our current grasp, mankind should **deeply value** and support the **exploration** of the **unknown if mankind is to succeed**. (2) Those feeling different could argue the **disadvantages** of such **exploration**, and their argument is **understandable**. (3) *After all, ships have sunk while exploring the oceans, divers have been lost while exploring the depths of the sea, people have died from poisonous bites and parasitic infections while exploring the jungles and astronauts have met their demise while exploring space.* (4) **Unarguably**, there has been **shock and disappointment** in all these endeavors, and the families and countries that have lost these great **explorers** have mourned. (5) **Therefore**, those who oppose taking such **risks** have **valid concerns**. (6) **Nevertheless**, as our planet's population increases, its size remains the same, so it is **incumbent upon humanity** to **value** the **enrichment** that can accompany **exploration**. (7) **After all**, one never knows what **surprises** and **benefits** can be found at different depths of the ocean. (8) Whether it be additional food sources for ever-increasing, human populations, or the **exploration** of oceanic currents that assist weather predictions such as rain and drought—thus allowing agriculture to adjust its planting decisions—**exploring the unknown is beneficial to mankind**. (9) And one never knows when a plant or herb **discovered** in a tropical jungle might be the next big **surprise** that cures multiple sclerosis, cancer, migraine headaches, etc., just as one never knows if we might increase in population so much that our planet becomes strained beyond its ability to sustain human life. (10) **After all**, what if our planet truly has limited resources? (11) What if our

greatest **challenge for existence**, despite the **shock** and **disappointment** along the way, is our ability to find additional planets that will **sustain human life**? (12) ***All this being possible***, the **exploration** of such **unknowns** might not just be important for our **enrichment**, but for **our very survival as well**.

Bolded Words: The words that are only **bolded** are all focused on the words in the prompt as well as a few words/concepts from my thesis that will assist in creating the value I place on “exploring the unknown.”

Italicized, Underlined & Bolded: The *italicized*, *underlined* and *bolded* words are transitional words. Use them. Be a thief and steal all of them if you want. Perhaps you could come up with a couple of your own. Whatever the case, use them! Don’t confuse your reader. **Confusion kills.**

Sentence 1 (TS) works to prepare the reader for both sides of the issue and gives a focus.

SENTENCE 2 & 5/ADRESSING THE COUNTERCLAIM: Words like *valid* and *understandable* should be used when explaining the counterclaim’s point. Do not use words like **good** or **great point**. Your job, when writing counterclaims, is to give specific examples and fairly explain them. Your job is not to make their argument for them.

Sentence 6 avoids confusion with the transitional word, *Nevertheless*. It makes it very clear that the writer is transitioning to his/her side of the argument. It is **critical for preventing confusion**. Quite often, writers forget this sentence/transitional technique; as a result, the reader becomes confused, and **CONFUSION KILLS IN ARGUMENT/SYNTHESIS ESSAYS**.

Sentences 6-11 focus completely on the writer’s position. It does not address anymore counterclaims because it is unneeded. It is solidly focused on the writer’s side of the argument.

Sentences 10 & 11 are examples of how to use rhetorical questions correctly as an argumentative/persuasive strategy. The argument has clearly been made. There is no real way to answer the questions in a manner that the writer wouldn’t want the reader to answer them given that the sentences (and paragraphs) beforehand have solidified the writer’s position. They are used to reinforce the ultimate VALUE that the writer places on exploration, which is core to the prompt. When students/writers attempt rhetorical questions in the introduction or even the first body paragraph, they risk having the audience/reader answer the question in a manner that doesn’t help the argument. Simply put, you have to guide readers to rhetorical questions. And if you don’t feel very confident with them, don’t attempt them. They aren’t required.

Sentence 12 only wraps up your side of the argument. You’ve addressed their argument sufficiently in the paragraph, so use the concluding sentence to wrap up your position in this paragraph. Your “wrap up” should naturally transition the reader into your conclusion.

Conclusion

The Big Picture: Reread your thesis. Based on its focus, what do you want the reader to be left with when he or she is done reading? What additional, meaningful detail can you add to your position that wraps up everything and assists your position? Lastly, why should someone care?

Conclusion: (1) The **fear of exploring the unknown is understandable**, but it is the **drive to explore the unknown** that **defines, enriches, and continues our survival**. (2) For instance, scientists and doctors are currently **exploring** the origins, weaknesses and strengths of the Coronavirus. (3) There has already been **shock** and **disappointment** as some of the **explorers** have become infected while doing their research; as a result, they **must cope** with the virus they are attempting to stop. (4) Nevertheless, **without** their **willingness to explore the unknown**, society would be without a weapon to stop this invasion. (5) We wouldn't know the best strategies to lessen the spread of this pandemic. (6) Hence, **those who explore** should be cautious when **exploring** the **unknown**, but the **exploration of the unknown** is **invaluable** if **humanity is to continue to flourish**.

Bolded Words: The words that are only **bolded** are all focused on the words in the prompt as well as a few words/concepts from my thesis that will assist in creating the value I place on "exploring the unknown."

Italicized, Underlined & Bolded: The *italicized*, *underlined* and *bolded* words are transitional words. Use them. Be a thief and steal all of them if you want. Perhaps come up with a couple of your own. Whatever the case, use them! Don't confuse your reader. **Confusion kills.**

Sentence 1 reintroduces the thesis and finalizes the last words of the thesis, which were **exploring the unknown is of extreme value if humanity is to flourish**. If you look at all the bolded words throughout the essay, that idea is discussed, everywhere. It is at the core of how I constantly address the **develop your own position on the value of exploring the unknown** part of the prompt (which is the prompt's core). To do well on argument essays (and all essays that have a prompt), you must adhere to the prompt's core.

Sentences 2-5 (or 2-3 or 2-4) relate the prompt to a contemporary issue of importance. The more specific, the better. It doesn't have to be as significant as the Coronavirus, but even relating it to something that people can relate to will work. Granted, this is challenging, but it does show insight by demonstrating that the writer is able to see the larger issue as well as still understand its relevance in modern society.

Sentence 3 is another counterclaim (which I sometimes call concessions). Another counterclaim IS NOT MANDATORY in the conclusion. If you use one, make sure you use it in a way that strongly supports your argument. Make sure you have a couple sentences immediately after it that strongly impress your position.

Sentence 6 (or 4 or 5) is your final statement on the issue. Drive home the last point you want to make in a manner that demonstrates your competence with your position.

A Larger, Structural View of the Essay and Why it is a High 6 on a 1-6 Rubric Scale: The INTRODUCTION and CONCLUSION approximately mirror each other in size. Mine are both six sentences, but they could be five sentences or even four sentences if the four sentences are a bit complex/lengthy. It can't be perfect in a timed setting, and that's fine, but their lengths should be approximately balanced. Also, if you take a **rhetorical look** at the example essay, the first body paragraph persuades through **pathos**. It uses relationships and emotions as its persuasive strategy. This would appeal to those who see things first through an emotional lens, which is approximately 75% of society. The second body paragraph appeals to those that view things more scientifically, logically (**logos**). When choosing your evidence in an argument, if you can choose evidence that brings in the large, majority of your readers (evidence

focused on pathos and logos), it will be more insightful. Additionally, your ability to write insightfully is how you **gain ethos** from those who are grading your essay. When writing, if your essay is precisely organized/structured, if you adhere to grammatical rules, vary your syntax, use appropriate, specific evidence, adhere to the prompt and are insightful, you are guaranteed a 6.

ONE LAST THING BEFORE THE ASSIGNMENT: Did you notice how the word “you” and “your” never pops up in the essay? Study the essay and figure out how I avoid these elementary terms. Engage your reader through your insight, not pronouns like “you” or “your.” Sometimes you can get away with “us” and “we” if you use the pronouns safely. I use them occasionally in my writing. I also use contractions, though rarely (“isn’t” and “wouldn’t” are in the essay). I can get away with this because the reader recognizes that I can clearly adhere to grammatical formality when I want, but occasionally I don’t want to because it just sounds more natural to use a contraction. If you haven’t worked on developing your own style of varying your syntax while remaining grammatically correct, **don’t use contractions in formal essays**. Experienced writers can break rules every now and then because they have established their ethos through their grammatical accuracy, their ability to vary their syntax, their ability to structure their essay and their ability to be insightful while focusing on the prompt. If you are a writer that is receiving rubric scores of 4+ and below on the 1-6 rubric scale, I recommend staying away from the use of pronouns such as “we” and “us” as well as contractions.

Okay everyone, here is the assignment for the next three weeks. Go to the following website:

<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-english-language-and-composition/exam>

Then scroll down to where it says, Past Exam Questions. Select that. You will see the 2019 Free-Response Questions option. Select that. Scroll down to the 3rd question on page 10. It is the argument essay prompt. Copy and paste it if you can. Sometimes I can and sometimes I can’t. Here it is if you can’t:

2019 AP[®] ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Question 3

Suggested time—40 minutes.

(This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

The term “overrated” is often used to diminish concepts, places, roles, etc. that the speaker believes do not deserve the prestige they commonly enjoy; for example, many writers have argued that success is overrated, a character in a novel by Anthony Burgess famously describes Rome as a “vastly overrated city,” and Queen Rania of Jordan herself has asserted that “[b]eing queen is overrated.”

Select a concept, place, role, etc. to which you believe that the term “overrated” should be applied. Then, write a well-developed essay in which you explain your judgment. Use appropriate **evidence from your reading, experience, or observations to support your argument**.

Assignment: I suggest you print the prompt if you have access to a printer and highlight the important terms. If not, bold the terms on your computer. Then, structure your essay. Take your time. What SPECIFIC evidence are you going to use for your side and the opposition’s side? Remember, your

evidence can come from things you've read (academics/research/random reading), things that have personally happened to you (anecdotal evidence), or things you've observed (friends, family, school, the news, etc.). The 2018 prompt said that you could use **appropriate, specific evidence to illustrate and develop your position**. That is no different from what this prompt is asking you to do. You can use evidence from all the categories named in the 2019 prompt on all argument essays. They may word it differently, but it's always the same. When thinking of your essay, get a fellow student's assistance or form a group of three and focus on what words/phrases/concepts in the prompt you will need to adhere to in your thesis and throughout your essay. But at the minimum, collaborate with one other student. Follow my example and try to mimic things that I do that could enhance your writing/response. THIS ESSAY SHOULD BE TYPED. Take your time—a couple/few hours if necessary. It is a challenging prompt. Remember, to pass, they are expecting you to have a college level of expertise. However, **do not become overly focused on writing to the level that the example essay does**. College Board does not expect that, even for people that receive 5's on the AP Exam. However, to receive a 5, the reader must see that you are approaching some of these skills. Also, some of these skills will **assist in your ability to infer** what **multiple-choice questions** are asking, so **study the concepts** and try to learn from them and incorporate them into your writing.

After you have completed the 2019 essay, **print it out and highlight the words, throughout the essay, that maintain your focus on the prompt and your thesis**. Are they consistently focused on the prompt and your thesis or do your thoughts ever wander? After that, **highlight in a different color the transitions you use to prevent confusion for your reader**. After that, **underline your counterclaims and make sure that your commentary and argument gets 2/3's of the focus**.

Next, **do the exact same with the 2017 argument essay**. Fair warning, the 2017 argument essay is really challenging. Pass rates were a few % points lower that year, and it's probably because it asked students to really know the world around them. In other words, start reading/watching various news sources/channels like I've been suggesting all year. Expose yourself to a variety of opinions, and don't only focus on the coronavirus. Here are the first couple sentences of the prompt to give you an idea of its difficulty (it didn't allow me to copy and paste it...and look up words you don't know): "The most essential skill in political theatre and consumer culture is artifice. Political leaders, who use the tools of mass propaganda to create a sense of faux intimacy with its citizens...."

After that essay, go to the 2016 argument essay. It's a saying from Oscar Wilde. I think it's easier than 2017's, but you can decide that for yourself. Anyway, I DO NOT WANT YOU TO COLLABORATE BEFORE WRITING THIS ESSAY, and I want it WRITTEN, NOT TYPED. Be ready to write the essay when you see it the first time (so you don't have time to think it over). Then, time yourself. Take 7-8 minutes to brainstorm and then 44-45 minutes to write it. Perhaps you could write it with a friend/fellow student at the same time; that would force each of you to hold each other accountable for the time. When done, collaborate after reading one another's. If you can't do it at the same time, take a picture and/or email it to a fellow student/s. Get feedback. **After the feedback, give yourself 40-42 minutes to write it again**.

Lastly, do one rhetorical analysis paragraph from Self-Reliance every other day. I think we left off at #12, so if you do one starting tomorrow (03/24), you should be done with #22 by 4/13. Keep the rhetorical analysis going strong during this time. Constantly look for new terms to use from your rhetorical triangle sheet and try to read his material at a faster pace, yet thoroughly. This will keep your mind focused on understanding things at a fast pace, which is what this 45 minute AP Exam will probably make sure you can do.

Okay, that should keep everyone busy for the next few weeks. I will learn more details about what I want to do to enhance distant learning by 4/6, so stay tuned, stay motivated, and stay positive during these challenging times!

I will be checking my email daily. Be very clear in the subject area since many questions will be coming in. **The subject of your email to me should contain your first full name, your last full name and the period and course. Example: John Doe P3 AP**

Sincerely,

Mr. Olson