

****Please note that these are the correct task directions. The task directions in the Course and Exam Description and Workshop Handbook are no longer valid****

AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam Prompts

Section I, Part A – (90 minutes total for Section 1, 30 minutes recommended for Part A)

1. Identify the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis. (3 points)
2. Identify the reasons the author cites and explain how he establishes his line of reasoning.
(6 points)
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the evidence the author uses to support his argument.
(6 points)

Section I, Part B – (90 minutes total for Section 1, 60 minutes recommended for Part B)

Directions: Read the following two articles carefully. Then, write an essay that evaluates and compares the effectiveness of the two arguments. Focus your essay on the relevance and credibility of the evidence each presents and the validity of their lines of reasoning.

Section II – (90 minutes total for Section II)

Directions: The following four (4) sources present multiple perspectives on the same issue or topic. Read the sources carefully, focusing on both the thematic connection among them and the different perspective each represents. Then, write a logically organized, well-reasoned, and well-written argument that presents your own perspective on the thematic link you identified. You must incorporate at least two (2) of the sources provided. You may also use the other provided sources or draw upon your own knowledge. In your response, refer to the provided sources as Source A, Source B, Source C, or Source D, or by the authors’ names.

END OF COURSE EXAM: SECTION I, PART A**15 POINTS****Question 1**

The response misstates the author's argument, main idea, or thesis.

The response identifies, in part and with some accuracy, the author's argument, main idea, or thesis.

The response accurately identifies the author's argument, main idea, or thesis.

1

2

3

Question 2

The response omits or misidentifies the reasons cited by the author and provides little or no explanation of how the author establishes a line of reasoning.

The response identifies the reasons cited by the author and provides a partial explanation of how the author establishes a line of reasoning.

The response identifies the reasons cited by the author and provides a clear explanation of how the author establishes a line of reasoning.

1-2

3-4

5-6

Question 3

The response omits or misidentifies some of the evidence. The response disregards how well the evidence supports the argument.

The response identifies some of the evidence. The response evaluates broadly how well the evidence supports the argument.

The response evaluates the relevance and credibility of the evidence. The response provides a thorough and detailed evaluation of how well the evidence supports the argument.

1-2

3-4

5-6

NOTE: IF A RESPONSE TO ONE QUESTION PROVIDES INFORMATION THAT SUPPORTS A RESPONSE TO ANOTHER QUESTION, SCORES TO BOTH QUESTIONS SHOULD BE CREDITED, AS APPLICABLE.

Section 1, Part A Commentary
2014 Practice AP Seminar Exam

Task Overview

This component of the AP Exam consists of three short-answer questions that assess analysis of an argument in a single source or document. Students are asked to analyze an argument by means of identifying reasons and using evidence. Question #1 asks students to identify the main idea of author Richard Feynman's argument from the essay *The Uncertainty of Science*. Question #2 requires the students to identify the reasons the author uses and explain how he uses them to establish his line of reasoning. The student then evaluates the effectiveness of the evidence Feynman uses to support his argument in question #3. The suggested time for answering all three questions was 40 minutes.

Sample A

Score: Low

The response to Question 1 achieves little success in identifying the author's main idea as the response only partially identifies the thesis. The response to Question 2 inadequately explains the author's line of reasoning. The response constructs a limited discussion of the reasons that were identified and provides insufficient explanation of Feynman's line of reasoning. The response to Question 3 disregards the author's use of evidence to support his argument. No attempt is made to identify the connection between the evidence and the author's main point and ultimately only a superficial explanation of the argument emerges.

Circle the Section I question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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The author's arguement throughout the passage is ~~that~~ that doubt and uncertainty are an essential part to science.

Circle the Section I question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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The author claims that doubt is an essential part to the world of science by stating claims of how in science what is important is the rate at which you create new things to test. He also states that what we call scientific knowledge today is a body of statements varying in degrees of uncertainty. What the author is saying is that science itself is doubt

Circle the Section I question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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Although there is no evidence, the argument is still strong. The author expresses the meaning of doubt throughout science as a means of showing his belief that doubt and science are connected.

Section 1, Part A Commentary
2014 Practice AP Seminar Exam

Sample B

Score: Medium

Feynman's main idea is partially identified in Question #1 when the connection between uncertainty and science is described. Some additional effort is made to flesh this out, but full credit is not earned. In response to Question #2, there is some confusion in the response as to whether a statement is a reason, a stipulation, or evidence. The response partially explains how the line of reasoning is established but relies largely on evidence rather than reasons to argue the point. For Question #3, the connections between evidence and the author's thesis are questionable. The language is weak, and there is only the broadest sense of how specific fragments of evidence support the overall argument.

Circle the Section I question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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In the document the Author, Richard Feynman explains his own reasoning as to why we always have an uncertainty in science. He claims that this uncertainty is valuable to the scientist because we can never be 100% sure of an answer. This idea is then supported by the claim that we live with "a philosophy of ignorance," and that this ignorance has value. With past failures comes progress and present failures gives potential for success in the future. In Feynman's last paragraph, he summarizes his overall argument by stating that "doubt is not a fearful thing, but a thing of very great value."

Circle the Section I question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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In the document, Richard Feynman makes a number of claims, most which ~~are~~ are not supported by evidence in his paper. The first major claim he makes in paragraph 1 is, when he states, "All scientific knowledge is uncertain." It is just his statement and it is neither supported by statistics, nor is it by facts which makes this statement simply just an opinion. He uses his first major claim to ~~use~~ establish his thesis and to convey his idea that ~~this~~ this uncertainty is good. In the second and third paragraphs, he uses hypothetical situations to try to support his claim made in the first paragraph and in the fourth paragraph, he introduces his idea that this uncertainty is good for us. His organization is good and I believe it helps him establish a good line of reasoning by introducing a thesis and his own interpretation of this thesis in his concluding paragraph. ^{his organization} ~~gives~~ gives him a ~~strong~~ strong line of reasoning that supports his thesis.

Circle the Section I question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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with the lack of counter arguments ~~and~~ statistics and no visibility of the other side of the argument, Richard Feynman's argument is not very strong. His thesis that "all scientific knowledge is uncertainty" is ^{neither} supported by statistics nor is it a credible claim. His second and third paragraphs are both hypothetical situations where Feynman creates conversations between scientists and states that they are always uncertain of their knowledge. These paragraphs should not be basis for supporting his thesis because they are not statistical ~~or~~ credible. We cannot assume all scientists share the belief of uncertainty simply because Feynman says so, which makes his article less effective. Overall, he uses no statistics making his argument based solely off his own opinions about the uncertainty in science. This makes his article not credible and the evidence that he uses in his article is not effective.

Section 1, Part A Commentary
2014 Practice AP Seminar Exam

Sample C
Score: High

The author's main idea is clearly identified in response to Question #1. The answer to Question #2 provides a clear explanation and analysis of the author's line of reasoning. The reasons identified in the response suggest thoughtful consideration of the article as a whole and illustrate a genuine understanding of Feynman's argument. For Question #3, the response proceeds to effectively describe and analyze the connection between the evidence and the author's argument. The response expresses reasonable concern over the lack of direct, concrete evidence and includes specific examples from the text to illustrate this point. The response clearly judges the credibility of the author's argument and expresses concerns about providing a one-sided view on an issue.

Student Sample C

Circle the Section 1 question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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The author's argument for this passage is that everyone should recognize the value of uncertainty and doubt. The author argues that because doubt is the driving force of inventions and discoveries, people should be complacent ~~and~~ and should not fear uncertainty.

Circle the Section I question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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The author makes two significant claims in the passage to support his argument on the value of uncertainty. The first is that doubt and uncertainty are the motivation for finding new directions for answers. The second claim is a humanitarian one, stating that doubt and uncertainty remind us of the struggle for attaining free speech, and teaches us a lesson in humanity.

The first claim the author makes is that doubt/uncertainty is the driving force for new ideas. Being complacent will lead to no progress, and demonstrates ignorance. This fully supports his argument, because it shows the value of doubt/uncertainty. The author makes this point throughout the passage, constantly reminding us why we need doubt. He establishes his line of reasoning around this claim, making it the main reason why people should recognize the importance of doubt and uncertainty.

The second claim the author makes, ~~less so~~ ^{which} is less focused on, is that doubt and uncertainty represent a struggle for freedom. Many idealists are repressed because their doubt/uncertainty challenges the status quo. The struggle to liberation is a struggle that should always be remembered, and doubt/uncertainty remind us of that. The author claims that doubt/uncertainty is valuable because of the lesson it teaches us.

Circle the Section I question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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Although the author presents a clear argument and makes strong claims on the subject, ~~the evidence he provides~~ the evidence he provides to support those claims are actually extremely weak. In fact, he almost presents no evidence to ~~show~~ demonstrate the validity of his claims.

The first body paragraph presents no evidence to support the argument. Instead he gives a hypothetical situation where is a scientist is having a conversation with a typical person on doubt. This scientist does not have a name or any qualifications. For all we know, this could be complete fiction. This undermines the validity of the argument greatly and makes the author seem untrustworthy.

The second body paragraph does present some evidence, but is extremely weak and does nothing to support his argument. He mentions "scientists", but gives no names or qualifications. The reader is simply unable to determine whether these "scientists" are valid sources. Even worse, these "scientists" could be total fantasy and made up by the author. The reader simply cannot determine whether this whole passage is valid or not.

The final body paragraph presents his own opinion to support his argument and claim. But what makes this author a trusted source? ~~The~~ The reader is only presented with the name of this source: Richard Feynman. Feynman is also clearly biased

Circle the Section I question you are answering on this page.

Part A Question 1	Part A Question 2	Part A Question 3	Part B
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After all, he is a scientist advocating for doubt. His opinion simply cannot be used to support his argument.

Interestingly, Feynman states in his conclusion that doubt is "clearly" a value in the sciences. This leaves me with the question: why is it "clearly" a value? There is no evidence to support that. Absolutely ~~not~~ no verified sources. The lack of evidence is the reason his argument and this passage as a whole falls flat on its face.