

AP English Lang 2020 Exam Notes

First: Read the prompt and identify **speaker, audience, purpose, context, and exigency** (as many as you can from the prompt). Write those down--you will refer to those throughout your essay!

Second: Read the passage. Look for rhetorical devices. Jot those down. Write line references next to them for evidence.

Note any shifts you see in tense, tone, person (first, second, third). Write line references for shifts--these are always important when analyzing rhetoric!

Most important advice: Focus on strategies, not simply devices.

Strategies tie back to the triangle--audience, purpose, context. Remember that the speaker's reasoning must match the audience's values.

Devices are your rhetorical terms. They are your evidence. Strategies are your commentary.

You must have a **thesis** in your introduction. It needs to address both **WHAT** the author does and **WHY** or **HOW** the author does it. Half a thesis will not result in a strong essay.

In your body paragraphs, make sure you make **CLAIMS (assertions that support your thesis)**, provide **EVIDENCE (directly quoted from the text)**, and supply **COMMENTARY (establishes line of reasoning from the evidence to the claim)**.

Be sure you do not include the following:

- Do not state the writer "uses diction" or "uses syntax."
- Do not state the writer uses logos, pathos, or ethos. The result of the writer's choices can be those appeals, but the appeals aren't his choices.
- Do not include "you" or "I" anywhere in the essay.

Good and great writing

Devices--what the writer uses--these are nouns

Word choice, syntax, repetition/parallelism, imagery, allusions, figurative language

Focusing on these is good

Strategies--what the writer does--these are verbs

Shifts, appeals, tone, structure, organization, details, compare/contrast

Focusing on these is great

Good claim: Writer + strong verb + devices + purpose + message

Great claims: By + strategies + writer + strong verb + message

Note taking on exam day

Rhetorical situation

Speaker

Audience

Purpose

Context

Exigency

Shifts: where are they? Tone person tense

Devices: If you see these, write down the line reference

Juxtaposition

Anecdotes

Repetition

Allusions

Comparisons

Other

Other

How does each device relate to the rhetorical situation? Connect each device you will write about to a part or parts of the rhetorical situation.

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Great claims: By + strategies + writer + strong verb + message

Writer + strategies + in order to + message