

## Scoring Rubric for Question 1: Synthesis Essay

6 points

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row A</b> <b>Thesis</b> <b>(0-1 points)</b></p> <p><b>4.B</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p> <p>For any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no defensible thesis.</li> <li>• The intended thesis only restates the prompt.</li> <li>• The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim.</li> <li>• There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p>Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only restate the prompt.</li> <li>• Do not take a position, or the position is vague or must be inferred.</li> <li>• Equivocate or summarize other’s arguments but not the student’s (e.g., some people say it’s good, some people say it’s bad).</li> <li>• State an obvious fact rather than making a claim that requires a defense.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responds to the prompt rather than restate or rephrase the prompt, <u>and</u> the thesis clearly takes a position rather than just stating that there are pros/cons.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity.</li> <li>• The thesis may be anywhere within the response.</li> <li>• For a thesis to be defensible, the sources must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>• The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn’t do so to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>• A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.</li> </ul>		

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<p><b>Row B</b> <b>Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points)</b></p> <p>2.A 4.A 6.A 6.B 6.C</p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p> <p>Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or references fewer than two of the provided sources.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides evidence from or references at least two of the provided sources.</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student's argument.</p>	<p><b>2 points</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides evidence from or references at least three of the provided sources.</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student's argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.</p>	<p><b>3 points</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning.</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p>	<p><b>4 points</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support all claims in a line of reasoning.</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p>										
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<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;"><b>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</b></th> <th style="width: 20%;"><b>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</b></th> <th style="width: 20%;"><b>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</b></th> <th style="width: 20%;"><b>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</b></th> <th style="width: 20%;"><b>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are incoherent or do not address the prompt.</li> <li>• May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tend to focus on summary or description of sources rather than specific details.</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities.</li> <li>• May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument.</li> <li>• May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim.</li> <li>• Do not explain the connections or progression between the student's claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument.</li> <li>• Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims.</li> <li>• Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument.</li> <li>• Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						<b>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</b>	<b>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</b>	<b>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</b>	<b>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</b>	<b>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are incoherent or do not address the prompt.</li> <li>• May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tend to focus on summary or description of sources rather than specific details.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities.</li> <li>• May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument.</li> <li>• May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim.</li> <li>• Do not explain the connections or progression between the student's claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument.</li> <li>• Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims.</li> <li>• Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the sources to build an argument.</li> <li>• Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.</li> </ul>															

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<p><b>Row C</b> <b>Sophistication</b> <b>(0-1 points)</b></p> <p>2.A 4.C 6.B 8.A 8.B 8.C</p>	<p><b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b> Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.</p>
	<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>	
	<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations.</li> <li>Only hint at or suggest other arguments.</li> <li>Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student's argument.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crafting a nuanced argument by consistently identifying and exploring complexities or tensions across the sources.</li> <li>Articulating the implications or limitations of an argument (either the student's argument or arguments conveyed in the sources) by situating it within a broader context.</li> <li>Making effective rhetorical choices that consistently strengthen the force and impact of the student's argument.</li> <li>Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student's argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</li> </ul>		