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Prestwick House AP* Language and Composition

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Prestwick House AP Language and Composition

Introduction: *How to Use this Book*

To the Student

Prestwick House AP Language and Composition was written with you in mind. The AP Language and Composition exam is a demanding exercise that requires both a deep knowledge of the writer's craft and the application of strong analytical skills. Each chapter in this book focuses on a specific element of that craft: purpose, adherence to conventions of language, use of literary and rhetorical devices, and so on.

After some instructional material—definitions, explanations, and the like—we provide you with a nonfiction passage, the type of passage that is likely to appear on an AP English Language exam. In some cases, the passage has appeared on the exam. Many of the passages are listed as suggested reading by the Common Core State Standards initiative, so they are well-recommended and worth your attention.

The first passage in each chapter is annotated to reflect the kind of thinking a top-notch AP student would do while reading. The passage is then followed by five multiple-choice questions with the answers revealed. These are not to "test" your understanding of the passage but to show you the often fine distinctions between the "best" answer and some of the other choices that might seem "right" as well. Following the questions are explanations of each choice—why it is wrong, why it is right but not the best. Again, all of this is to model for you the type of thinking you'll want to have mastered before you take the exam.

Finally, we present you with an AP-style essay question for that same passage—followed by a model student essay.

Look over the passage and model test items as often as you need until you feel confident that you understand the chapter's focus. When you're ready to try it

on your own, we provide you another high-quality nonfiction passage, multiple-choice questions, and writing prompt. Use the exercise as a practice test—and you can check your answers in the answer key at the end of the book.

Prestwick House AP Language and Composition follows the same format chapter after chapter, including the section on the Synthesis Essay. Here, too, we provide two models of quality student work for you to examine before you work on your own synthesis problems.

Whether you've bought this book for your own use at home or are using it as a text book in your AP class, we are confident you'll benefit from the models and exercises and will approach your AP English Language exam with confidence.

One important note: All of the passages and excerpts that are attributed to actual persons are accurately and authentically replicated with the appropriate permissions.

Some of the sources and data presented in this book, however,—especially in Synthesis Exercise Two—have been created solely for the purpose of the exercise. You are, therefore, urged to exercise caution and to verify all information before citing any of the sources in this book for your own research project. (You should be doing your own research anyway, right?)

To the Teacher

Prestwick House AP Language and Composition was written with you in mind. We know as well as you do that the AP Language and Composition exam is a demanding exercise that requires both a deep knowledge of the writer's craft and the application of strong analytical skills. We also know as well as you do that, in the wealth of AP test-prep materials on the market, there is precious little that is truly useable as a core text for your class. We know that your task is not only to prepare your students for the exam but to prepare them to meet your district and state's graduation requirements.

Toward that end, we've made every effort to fill this book with important nonfiction titles—the types of works that are likely to appear on the AP exam as well as those suggested by groups like the Common Core State Standards initiative. Thus, this book is useable as a core text for nonfiction even for classes that do not have an Advanced Placement emphasis.

For AP classes, however, you'll find the added benefit of the popular and effective teach-model-and-practice approach in every chapter. Each chapter focuses on a specific element of the craft: purpose, adherence to conventions of language, use of literary and rhetorical devices, and so on and could be a self-contained, weeklong unit.

It is your choice the extent to which you use this as a "homework text" or an "in-class text": use the annotated passages to foster class discussion; examine with the students the often fine distinctions between the "best" answer and some of the

other choices that might also seem "right"; discuss the exercise passages in class or assign them as out-of-class reading; have the students do the exercise multiple-choice questions as a classroom activity or homework assignment; or have your students write the exercise essays for a grade or for pure practice.

Students can check their own understanding with the answer keys at the end of the book, or you can use the explanatory keys to help your students develop the analytical skills they will need to demonstrate on the exam.

Prestwick House AP Language and Composition is flexible and adaptable. It allows you to be as involved or as removed as you want and your students need.

One important note: All of the passages and excerpts that are attributed to actual persons are accurately and authentically replicated with the appropriate permissions.

Some of the sources and data presented in this book, however,—especially in Synthesis Exercise Two—have been created solely for the purpose of the exercise. Students are, therefore, urged to exercise caution and to verify all information before citing any of the sources in this book for their own research projects. (They should be doing their own research anyway, right?)

Chapter 1

As a writer, you've probably already been taught to think always about your "audience and purpose." Audience and purpose may actually be specified in your writing assignments or the prompts on some of the writing tests you have taken. As a writer, you've probably also been taught that your awareness of purpose governs many of the decisions you will make in terms of organizational pattern, amount of information from outside, cited sources (and how you present it), tone, word choice, sentence structure, and so on.

The writers whose works you read have also been taught to be aware of audience and purpose, and awareness of purpose has the same implications for how they write as it does for you. It follows, then, that a *reader's* awareness of the author's purpose will help him or her understand, analyze, and evaluate the piece.

The three most common purposes for writing are to inform, to persuade, and to entertain. Certainly, these purposes are not mutually exclusive; most professional, published writers hope to entertain as well as inform and/or persuade. It is, therefore, helpful for readers to know why the piece they are reading was written and avoid being misinformed or misled.

To inform

It almost goes without saying that to inform others is probably the most common purpose for writing. Even bloggers, tweeters, and people writing on social networks, for the most part, write to inform. Textbooks are written primarily to inform, as are newspapers and magazines (including electronic publications), and nonfiction books.

The person who is writing to inform is not pressing an agenda or arguing a point—at least not openly. Informative writing exists primarily for the information it conveys and should be evaluated in terms of the quality of that information and the effectiveness with which the writer communicates it.

Consider the following passage, an excerpt from Charles Darwin's account of his famous voyage to the Galapagos Islands. It has been annotated to point out to you the types of issues—word choice, sentence structure, use of figurative devices—that a careful reader would need to examine in a close reading, an analysis, or an evaluation of Darwin's account.

After you examine the passage and the accompanying notes, look at how a student taking the AP Language exam might respond to multiple-choice questions and a free-response item dealing with how Darwin communicates the information at the heart of his narrative.

from:

Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of His Majesty's Ships Adventure and Beagle (1839)

Charles Darwin (1809-1882)

1 SEPTEMBER 15th.—This archipelago[1] consists of ten principal islands, of which five exceed the others in size. They are situated under the Equator, and between five and six hundred miles westward of the coast of America. They are all formed of volcanic rocks;[2] a few fragments of granite curiously glazed and altered by the heat, can hardly be considered as an exception. Some of the craters, surmounting the larger islands, are of immense size, and they rise to a height of between three and four thousand feet. Their flanks are studded by innumerable smaller orifices.[3] I scarcely hesitate to affirm, that there must be in the whole archipelago at least two thousand craters. These consist either of lava or scoriae, or of finely-stratified, sandstone-like tuff. Most of the latter are beautifully symmetrical; they owe their origin to eruptions of volcanic mud without any lava: it is a remarkable circumstance that every one of the twenty-eight tuff-craters which were examined, had their southern sides either much lower than the other sides, or quite broken down and removed.[4] As all these craters apparently have been formed when standing in the sea, and as the waves from the trade wind and the swell from the open Pacific here unite their forces on the southern coasts of all the islands, this singular uniformity in the broken state of the craters, composed of the soft and yielding tuff, is easily explained.[5]

Sample Student Commentary

[1] The antecedent to the demonstrative pronoun, this, is understood to be the Galapagos Archipelago, which is the title of this chapter.

[2] Note the use of the semicolon. Darwin is not simply combining two main clauses; they are closely connected by subject matter—the geologic makeup of the islands.

[3] Because this in an informative essay, Darwin is not overly concerned with narrative style or voice. Note the long string of basic, subject-verb sentences.

[4] Even the few instances of narrative intrusion—"can hardly be considered," "I scarcely hesitate to affirm," "it is a remarkable circumstance"—do little to alter the reader's understanding of, or reaction to, the essential facts of the description.

[5] The explanation, while logical and carefully laid out for the reader, is actually speculation. Darwin admits this when he says the craters were "apparently" formed.

2 Considering that these islands are placed directly under the equator, the climate is far from being excessively hot; this seems chiefly caused by[6] the singularly low temperature of the surrounding water, brought here by the great southern Polar current. Excepting during one short season, very little rain falls, and even then it is irregular; but the clouds generally hang low. Hence,[7] whilst the lower parts of the islands are very sterile, the upper parts, at a height of a thousand feet and upwards, possess a damp climate and a tolerably luxuriant vegetation. This is especially the case on the windward sides of the islands, which first receive and condense the moisture from the atmosphere.[8]

3 In the morning (17th) we landed on Chatham Island, which, like the others,[9] rises with a tame and rounded outline, broken here and there by scattered hillocks, the remains of former craters. Nothing could be less inviting [10] than the first appearance. A broken field of black basaltic lava, thrown into the most rugged waves, and crossed by great fissures, is everywhere covered by stunted, sun-burnt brushwood, which shows little signs of life. The dry and parched surface, being heated by the noon-day sun, gave to the air a close and sultry feeling, like that from a stove:[11] we fancied even that the bushes smelt unpleasantly. Although I diligently tried to collect as many plants as possible, I succeeded in getting very few; and such wretched-looking little weeds would have better become an arctic than an equatorial Flora. The brushwood appears, from a short distance, as leafless as our trees during winter; and it was some time before I discovered that not only almost every plant was now in full leaf, but that the greater number were in flower. The commonest bush is one of the *Euphorbiaceae*: an acacia and a great odd-looking cactus are the only trees which afford any shade. After the season of heavy rains, the islands are said to appear for a short time partially green. The volcanic island of Fernando Noronha, placed in many respects under nearly similar conditions, is the only other country where I have seen a vegetation at all like this of the Galapagos Islands.

4 The Beagle sailed round Chatham Island, and anchored in several bays. One night I slept on shore on a part of the island, where black truncated cones were extraordinarily numerous: from one small eminence I counted sixty of them, all surmounted by craters more or less perfect. The greater number consisted merely of a ring of red scoriae or slags, cemented together: and their height above the plain of lava was not more than from fifty to a hundred feet; none had been very lately active. The entire surface of this part of the island seems to have been permeated, like a sieve,[12] by the subterranean vapours: here and there the lava, whilst soft, has been blown into great bubbles; and in other

Sample Student Commentary

[6] Again, Darwin presents us with an unproven conclusion, though it is, again, based on an observation, and he does share with the reader the basis of the conclusion.

[7] The "hence" suggests that Darwin is certain of this cause-and-effect relationship. He is not hypothesizing the reason for the high-altitude vegetation.

[8] Notice how every observation is followed by a detailed explanation.

[9] This is a literal prepositional phrase, not a SIMILE.

[10] This is a nice example of LITOTES, one of the rare rhetorical devices in this essay.

[11] This is indeed a SIMILE but, like the earlier narrative intrusions, does not really alter the meaning or impact of the passage.

[12] Here is another SIMILE. Again, it is almost a literal comparison and does nothing to create tone, mood, or voice.

parts, the tops of caverns similarly formed have fallen in, leaving circular pits with steep sides. From the regular form of the many craters, they gave to the country an artificial appearance, which vividly reminded me of those parts of Staffordshire, where the great iron-foundries are most numerous. The day was glowing hot, and the scrambling over the rough surface and through the intricate thickets, was very fatiguing; but I was well repaid by the strange Cyclopean† scene. As I was walking along I met two large tortoises, each of which must have weighed at least two hundred pounds: one was eating a piece of cactus, and as I approached, it stared at me and slowly walked away; the other gave a deep hiss, and drew in its head. These huge reptiles, surrounded by the black lava, the leafless shrubs, and large cacti, seemed to my fancy like some antediluvian animals.[13] The few dull-coloured birds cared no more for me than they did for the great tortoises. ❦

†Rather than alluding to the mythological Cyclops, Darwin is probably referring here to Cyclopean masonry, an ancient building technique in which stones are stacked with minimal gaps and no mortar between them.

Sample Student Commentary

[13] This SIMILE and the earlier LITOTES are the only two figurative or rhetorical uses in this essay. Darwin's intent has been to share information, not persuade, entertain, or express his personal opinion or feelings.

Sample multiple-choice questions:

1. In the line "Most of the latter are beautifully symmetrical.," (paragraph 1) "latter" refers to

A. "their southern sides."
B. "innumerable smaller orifices."
C. "lava and scoriae."
D. "sandstone-like tuff."
E. "eruptions of volcanic mud."

2. Darwin's reference to "[t]he volcanic island of Fernando Noronha" (paragraph 3) serves primarily to

A. illustrate the extent of his travels.
B. compare the Galapagos with a more familiar island.
C. intensify the hostility of the island geography.
D. orient the reader to the *Beagle's* location.
E. allude to an earlier portion of Darwin's book.

3. The primary focus of the author's observation in the sentence beginning "I scarcely hesitate to affirm…" (paragraph 1) is the

A. number of craters.
B. ubiquity of the craters.
C. origin of the craters.
D. size of the craters.
E. substance of the craters.

4. Which of the following organizational plans does Darwin employ most frequently in this essay?

A. sequential order
B. order of magnitude
C. chronological order
D. cause and effect
E. comparison and contrast

5. The strongest personal evaluation in the essay emphasizes the

A. ruggedness of the landscape.
B. disinterest of the wildlife.
C. incongruity of the climate.
D. inhospitable nature of the islands.
E. remoteness of the archipelago.

Answers and Explanations:

1. "Latter" must refer to the second of two items mentioned previously. Therefore, (A) and (E) are immediately excluded since they occur later in the passage. (B) occurs too much earlier to be the referent for "the latter," nor is it the second of two items. Only (C) and (D) remain, and (D) is the second in the pairing. **Thus (D) is the correct answer. It is the tuff-craters that are "beautifully symmetrical."**

2. As the overall purpose of this passage is clearly to provide a clear and factual description of the flora, fauna, and geology of the Galapagos, (A) is unlikely. (C) is true but relies on the reader's knowing something about Fernando Noronha; otherwise it is a pointless reference. Likewise (D) is impossible if the reader has no prior knowledge of Fernando Noronha. (E) is possible, as an earlier chapter may be where the reader learned of Fernando Noronha, but there is nothing in *this* passage to suggest that. **Therefore, (B) is the best answer. The comparison to Fernando Noronha is meaningful to the reader only if the reader has some prior familiarity with this island.**

3. The affirmation that Darwin makes without hesitation is that there were "at least two thousand craters." **Thus (A) is the correct answer**. That the craters are found everywhere in the archipelago (B), how they formed (C), their size (D), and makeup (E) are all mentioned, but only in the aftermath of Darwin's amazed affirmation of how many craters there were.

4. Throughout the passage, Darwin uses comparisons with places and objects the reader should know: the air was hot "like that from a stove," the islands had apparently been permeated by volcanic gas "like a sieve." The plant life is compared to the island of Fernando Noronha, and even the description of the archipelago itself contrasts the

Analyzing Tone, Mood, and Effect

Chapter 3

Tone is usually defined as the attitude of the writer, whether he or she is angry, fervent, bored, whimsical, etc.

Mood is more general; it is the overall feeling of the work. It is largely inferred by the reader based on the author's tone, as well as his or her use of other elements like imagery, metaphor and simile, symbolism, etc.

Effect, then, is the reader's emotional, psychological, and practical response to the tone and mood of the text. It is closely related to the author's purpose. An author, for example, may choose to inform by being entertaining, humorous, glib. Another might decide that inciting his or her reader to anger might be the best way of persuading the reader.

Writers whose works you read know how to use the tools of tone and mood to create their desired effect on their readers. When you laugh at a humorous anecdote or pause in reflective sorrow at the end of a memorial, chances are that that is exactly the response or the effect that the writer wanted the piece to have. To know your response and to acknowledge it is often sufficient; after all, much of the reading we do is purely for our own purposes, and there is no need to over think our reactions.

Still, the writer, the editor, the critic, and the student must, at times, probe deeper and examine *how* the author achieves the desired effect; how his or her word choice, sentence structure, use of figurative and rhetorical devices, etc., help to create the tone; what other elements contribute to the mood of the text; and exactly how the writer achieves the desired effect on the reader.

Formal/Academic/Authoritative

Much of the nonfiction you will read throughout your education will be instructional or informative, written by experts in their field. For the most part, these experts will not want their voices to interfere with their subject matter. By

the same token, however, the experts want to make certain they convey their expertise to their readers.

Academic lecturers and speakers, too, strive for a fragile balance between their personal presence and their subject matter. While, certainly, readers and listeners of these scholars do want to hear what *these experts* have to say about their subjects, it is equally true that they want to hear what the experts have to say *about their subjects*.

Read the following memorial, an essay highlighting the life, character, and achievements of Irving Kristol. It has been annotated to point out to you the techniques: word choice, sentence structure, use of figurative devices, that Epstein uses to create and maintain a formal yet sympathetic tone.

After you examine the passage and the accompanying notes, look at how a student taking the AP Language exam might respond to multiple-choice questions and a free-response item dealing with how Joseph Epstein communicates with his reader and creates reader sympathy for the subject of his memorial.

A Genius of Temperament

Joseph Epstein remembers Irving Kristol

Joseph Epstein

1 As the last of the New York intellectuals depart the planet, it becomes apparent that Irving Kristol, who published less than most of them, had a wider and deeper influence on his time than all of them.[1]

2 Just how and why is not all that clear, but it is so. Nor is it clear how best to describe Irving. He wasn't a writer exactly, or at least not primarily; neither was he chiefly an editor, though he in fact edited some of the best intellectual magazines of his day. He wrote political journalism, but to call him a political journalist is severely to limit him. That baggy-pants term public intellectual doesn't do the job, either. He was over his lifetime associated with various institutions—magazines, universities, think tanks—but he always seemed somehow slightly outside of, somehow larger than, all of them.[2]

3 Irving[3] was the ultimate free-lance. If my father were alive,[4] he would say of Irving Kristol that he worked out of his car, with the irony added that Irving, who grew up in New York to immigrant parents, never learned to drive. *Sui generis* was what Irving

Sample Student Commentary

[1] Epstein begins with something of an antithesis: Kristol wrote less, but influenced more. That creates an immediate sense of suspense, as the reader wonders what kind of influence Kristol had and how he managed to have such a deep one.

[2] This paragraph is a wonderful example of definition by negation. We do not know what Kristol was, but we know what he was not.

[3] Because this is a memorial, and Epstein wants to establish a sympathy between his reader and his subject, he uses the man's first name, rather than referring to him as "Kristol" or "Mr. Kristol."

[4] Note the correct use of the subjunctive: if contrary to fact. "If my father were alive," Epstein doesn't write, "If my father was alive."

SOURCE D (Gower):

This famous allegorical depiction of the victorious Queen Elizabeth is attributed to George Gower and is thought to have been painted sometime around 1588. (Note that 1588 is also the year that James Aske's book—Source C—was published).

Sample Student Commentary

Right hand on globe—covering the Americas—so far, only Spain had American colonies, but Elizabeth had imperial aspirations…England as master of the seas.

British crown over her head and the globe.

Clouds on Spanish fleet—stormy seas; sun on British fleet—placid seas.

The storm is behind her, and she looks ahead to the calm and sunshine.

A mermaid or mythological siren stands at Elizabeth's right hand…Elizabeth is the siren who charmed the Spanish fleet to its destruction…?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

SYNTHESIS ESSAY

Exercise One:

Directions: The following prompt is based on the accompanying five sources.

This question requires you to integrate information or views from a variety of different sources into a coherent, well-written essay. *Refer directly to the sources to support your thesis, but do not merely paraphrase or summarize the sources. Your own thesis should be the focus; the sources should simply support this argument.*

Remember to attribute both direct and indirect citations.

Introduction
Many historians assert that, rather than restoring the Union, the aftermath of the Civil War actually created a new and vastly different United States from the nation that had divided in 1861. The unconditional surrender of the states that had been in rebellion strengthened the national identity, so that one's identification as "American" began to overshadow his or her identification with an individual state. Likewise the victory of one ideology over another began to shape a national character that, many insist, is still in the process of developing. Others argue, however, that the national character that began to emerge in 1865 was simply the long-delayed manifestation of the nation that was intended in 1776 and 1787.

Assignment
Carefully study the following sources (including all introductory information). Then, write an essay that cites at least three of the sources for illustration, evidence, and support, in which you describe the national character suggested by the sources and argue whether the sources illustrate an actual change in national direction or simply show progress along the same path.

Refer to the sources as Source A, Source B, etc.; titles are included for your convenience.

Source A (Nast)
Source B (Jones)
Source C (Lincoln)
Source D (*Harper's Weekly*)
Source E (*Harper's Weekly* - 2)