

# AP Seminar Summer Learning 2026

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**Course Description:** <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-seminar>

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*AP Seminar is a foundational course that engages students in cross-curricular conversations that explore the complexities of academic and real-world topics and issues by analyzing divergent perspectives. Using an inquiry framework, students practice reading and analyzing articles, research studies, and foundational, literary, and philosophical texts; listening to and viewing speeches, broadcasts, and personal accounts; and experiencing artistic works and performances. Students learn to synthesize information from multiple sources, develop their own perspectives in written essays, and design and deliver oral and visual presentations, both individually and as part of a team. Ultimately, the course aims to equip students with the power to analyze and evaluate information with accuracy and precision in order to craft and communicate evidence-based arguments.*

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**We are excited to welcome you to AP Seminar.** In order to prepare yourself for the challenge of college-level curricula, you will complete some learning over the summer.

These learning tasks are designed to be completed independently. Remember, your goal is to get yourself ready for AP Seminar, to build your brain muscle, so do your own work. The result, your own authentic work, will tell us what to reteach and help you set goals for growth.

Teachers are not in school until August 25, 2026. If you have questions, do your best to work through them.

It is okay if you do not have answers yet. That is the purpose of learning.

Take time to read, relax, and enjoy yourself. We will be excited to hear your reflections and discoveries when we meet on August 31.

**Submission Requirements:**

- All work must be hand-written on lined paper. You may write on the front/back.
- Label each page with your full name.
- Separate and label each response by its Task number.
- Submit on the first day of class for a completion grade.

## General Directions:

Make sure to read the directions carefully and to follow them completely. Some tasks require reading and annotating only; others include a written product to submit. The materials you need are either linked in this document or are provided in the appendix. A computer / Internet access is necessary for Tasks 3 and 5 only.

## “Must Do” Summer Learning Tasks:

Goal: Enter into academic or real-world conversations about complex issues

*“The best way to determine that you’ve understood another perspective is to be able to state it in your own words. Take the information apart, look at its parts, and then, put it back together again in language that is meaningful to you.” (Gilroy, “Interrogating Texts”)*

### ➤ Task 1 – Read to learn about academic conversations

**Read and make notes from the Introduction and Chapter 14 from *They Say, I Say* by Graff and Birkenstein** (see Appendix A, p. 5). You will need these notes for the next task and for class in the Fall.

### ➤ Task 2 – Apply what Graff and Birkenstein say

First, **read and annotate “Go Ahead, Laugh!”** by Patrick Malone (see Appendix B, p. 20). This is an example of an AP Seminar text.

Then, **write a 1-paragraph objective summary of the overall text.** To write a good summary, you must put your own beliefs on hold and look through the writer’s eyes. We should not be able to tell whether you agree or disagree with the ideas you are summarizing.

Finally, **analyze (break down) how the argument has been made.** Respond to these questions in complete sentences, with text references when appropriate:

- What is the writer asserting?
- What am I being asked to believe or accept? Facts? Opinions? Some mixture?
- What reasons or evidence does the author supply to convince me? Where is the strongest or most effective evidence the author offers -- and why is it compelling?
- Is there any place in the text where the reasoning breaks down? Are there things that do not make sense, conclusions that are drawn prematurely, moments where the writer undermines their purposes?

**You will submit your summary and analysis.**

Goal: Practice disciplined and scholarly research skills

➤ Task 3 – Watch to identify effective strategies for evaluating information

**Watch the Crash Course Navigating Digital Information series (#1-11), developed by the Stanford History Education Group:** <https://tinyurl.com/2pjhfu7c>. Make notes on the specific strategies described in each video. Hold onto these notes for the next task and for class in the Fall.

➤ Task 4 – Apply the strategies in the age of Generative AI

Although John Green does mention AI, the video series was published four years before ChatGPT upset the world of academic discourse. **Respond to the following prompts:**

- a) Which of the Crash Course strategies could be used to determine if information (print, image, video, etc.) may have been created by Generative AI?
- b) What information is missing from the Crash Course series regarding Generative AI and AI slop? What strategies would you recommend to avoid false information?

**You will submit your responses.**

Goal: Explore relevant topics that appeal to your interests and curiosity

➤ Task 5 – Use prior knowledge and questions to retrieve interesting texts

**Study the Tiers of Credibility** (see Appendix C, p. 22). During exploratory research, it's appropriate to engage with Tiers 3-4. You still need to verify the credentials and reputation of the author, publisher, site owner and/or sponsor. Examples of Tier 3 sources include *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The Guardian (UK)*. Examples of Tier 4 include *The Atlantic*, *The New Yorker*, *Scientific American*, and *The Economist*.

**Locate two articles (800+ words) on a topic(s) of interest from a Tier 3 or Tier 4 source such as those mentioned above.** They can be feature articles, investigative pieces, essays, editorials, or commentary. If you need help with a topic, start with your ELA books: what issue(s) from your fiction/non-fiction book could you read more about? (Conversely, you can find your ELA non-fiction book based on your articles!)

**Print, read, and annotate both articles.** As you read, think about what complex issues are represented and what the authors might be adding to the “larger conversation(s)” about those issues. Record any new comments or questions that the readings spark in your mind. Hold onto the printed readings and your notes.

**You will present these readings during the first week(s) of school.**

Goal: Reflect to increase learning and self-awareness of personal and collaborative effort

➤ Task 6 – Consider how your goals and values influence your actions

Metacognition is the awareness of your own thought processes. According to the Teaching and Learning Lab at MIT, experts don't just possess more knowledge; "they are more aware of themselves as learners and regularly reflect to understand why their chosen strategy is working (or not)."

Reflecting is an important part of metacognition. **Respond to the following prompts as if you were writing in a journal:**

- a) How would you describe yourself in terms of emotional self-regulation? How do you handle frustration and/or overwhelm? What strategies help you solve problems and persevere? Who are your "cheerleaders"?
- b) How would you describe yourself in terms of organization? What is your system for organizing paperwork? digital files? What could use improvement?
- c) How would you describe yourself in terms of time management? Do you plan ahead or wait until the last minute? Do you understand how to break down a project over time? What scheduling and monitoring tools do you use?
- d) How would you describe yourself in terms of social intelligence and teamwork? What do you bring to collaborative projects? What do you look for in a successful team?

**You will submit your responses.**

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**Additional "Can Do" Learning Tasks:**

**Read the AP<sup>®</sup> Capstone Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication or Falsification of Information and AP<sup>®</sup> Capstone Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence** (see Appendix D) to learn how College Board values honest and trustworthy researchers who engage directly with their sources. Pay close attention to what does and does not qualify as acceptable use. Be aware that AP Seminar students must complete in-person, oral checkpoints to demonstrate they are not using generative AI to bypass work.

**Review Formatting and Citation Styles.** One way researchers build trust is by following the formatting style of their discipline and by crediting their sources. The AP<sup>®</sup> Capstone program does not require or specify a specific style guide; however, students should maintain the conventions of a single style guide in an individual project. While citation machines are helpful, they are flawed by user error. Check out the MLA Style Center for an Interactive Practice Template and Sample Essays: <https://style.mla.org/>. The APA Style Guide has a similar site: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>.

## Appendix A

### From *They Say, I Say*

#### Introduction

#### ***Entering the Conversation***

Think about an activity that you do particularly well: cooking, playing the piano, shooting a basketball, even something as basic as driving a car. If you reflect on this activity, you'll realize that once you mastered it you no longer had to give much conscious thought to the various moves that go into doing it. Performing this activity, in other words, depends on your having learned a series of complicated moves — moves that may seem mysterious or difficult to those who haven't yet learned them.

The same applies to writing. Often without consciously realizing it, accomplished writers routinely rely on a stock of established moves that are crucial for communicating sophisticated ideas. What makes writers masters of their trade is not only their ability to express interesting thoughts but their mastery of an inventory of basic moves that they probably picked up by reading a wide range of other accomplished writers. Less experienced writers, by contrast, are often unfamiliar with these basic moves and unsure how to make them in their own writing. Hence this book, which is intended as a short, user-friendly guide to the basic moves of academic writing.

One of our key premises is that these basic moves are so common that they can be represented in templates that you can use right away to structure and even generate your own writing. Perhaps the most distinctive feature of this book is its presentation of many such templates, designed to help you successfully enter not only the world of academic thinking and writing, but also the wider worlds of civic discourse and work.

Instead of focusing solely on abstract principles of writing, then, this book offers model templates that help you put those principles directly into practice. Working with these templates will give you an immediate sense of how to engage in the kinds of critical thinking you are required to do at the college level and in the vocational and public spheres beyond.

Some of these templates represent simple but crucial moves like those used to summarize some widely held belief.

► Many Americans assume that \_\_\_\_\_.

Others are more complicated.

- ▶ On the one hand, \_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, \_\_\_\_\_.
- ▶ Author X contradicts herself. At the same time that she argues \_\_\_\_\_, she also implies \_\_\_\_\_.
- ▶ I agree that \_\_\_\_\_.
- ▶ This is not to say that \_\_\_\_\_.

It is true, of course, that critical thinking and writing go deeper than any set of linguistic formulas, requiring that you question assumptions, develop strong claims, offer supporting reasons and evidence, consider opposing arguments, and so on. But these deeper habits of thought cannot be put into practice unless you have a language for expressing them in clear, organized ways.

### STATE YOUR OWN IDEAS AS A RESPONSE TO OTHERS

The single most important template that we focus on in this book is the “they say \_\_\_\_\_; I say \_\_\_\_\_” formula that gives our book its title. If there is any one point that we hope you will take away from this book, it is the importance not only of expressing your ideas (“I say”) but of presenting those ideas as a response to some other person or group (“they say”). For us, the underlying structure of effective academic writing—and of responsible public discourse—resides not just in stating our own ideas but in listening closely to others around us, summarizing their views in a way that they will recognize, and responding with our own ideas in kind. Broadly speaking, academic writing is argumentative writing, and we believe that to argue well you need to do more than assert your own position. You need to enter a conversation, using what others say (or might say) as a launching pad or sounding board for your own views. For this reason, one of the main pieces of advice in this book is to write the voices of others into your text.

In our view, then, the best academic writing has one underlying feature: it is deeply engaged in some way with other people’s views. Too often, however, academic writing is taught as a process of saying “true” or “smart” things in a vacuum, as if it were possible to argue effectively without being in conversation with someone else. If you have been taught to write a traditional five-paragraph essay, for example, you have learned how to develop a thesis and support it with evidence. This is good advice as far as it goes, but it leaves out the important fact that in the real world we don’t make arguments without being provoked. Instead, we make arguments because someone has said or done something (or perhaps not said or done something) and we need to respond: “I can’t see why you like the Lakers so much”; “I agree: it was a great film”; “That argument is contradictory.” If it weren’t for other people and our need to challenge, agree with, or otherwise respond to them, there would be no reason to argue at all.

### “WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS?”

To make an impact as a writer, then, you need to do more than make statements that are logical, well supported, and consistent. You must also find a way of entering into conversation with the views of others, with something “they say.” The easiest and most common way writers do this is by summarizing what others say and then using it to set up what they want to say.

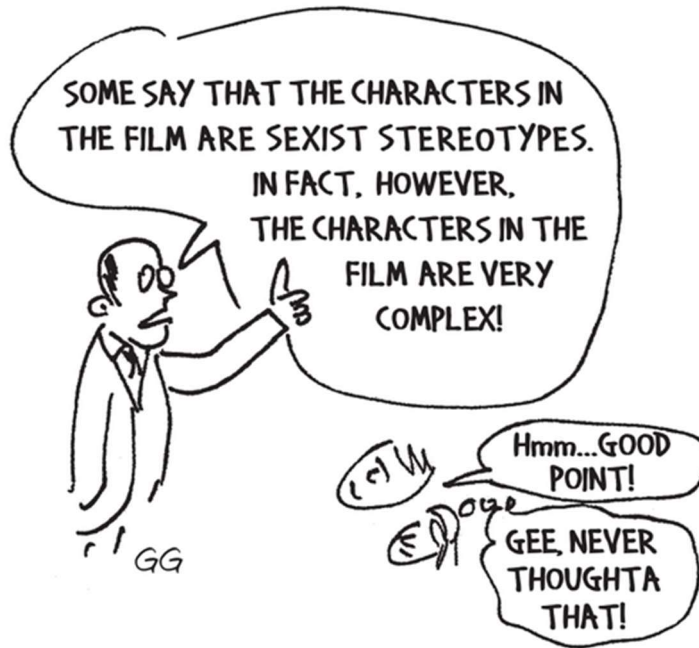
“But why,” as a student of ours once asked, “do I always need to summarize the views of others to set up my own view? Why can’t I just state my own view and be done with it?” Why indeed? After all, “they,” whoever they may be, will have already had their say, so why do you have to repeat it? Furthermore, if they had their say in print, can’t readers just go and read what was said themselves?

The answer is that if you don’t identify the “they say” you’re responding to, your own argument probably won’t have a point. Readers will wonder what prompted you to say what you’re saying and therefore motivated you to write. As the [cartoon below] suggests, without a “they say,” what you are saying may be clear to your audience, but why you are saying it won’t be.

Even if we don’t know what film he’s referring to, it’s easy to grasp what the speaker means here when he says that its characters are very complex. But it’s hard to see why the speaker feels the need to say what he is saying. “Why,” as one member of his imagined audience wonders, “is he telling us this?” So the characters are complex—so what?



Now look at what happens to the same proposition when it is presented as a response to something “they say”:



We hope you agree that the same claim—“the characters in the film are very complex”—becomes much stronger when presented as a response to a contrary view: that the film’s characters “are sexist stereotypes.” Unlike the speaker in the first cartoon, the speaker in the second has a clear goal or mission: to correct what he sees as a mistaken characterization.

#### THE AS-OPPOSED-TO-WHAT FACTOR

To put our point another way, framing your “I say” as a response to something “they say” gives your writing an element of contrast without which it won’t make sense. It may be helpful to think of this crucial element as an “as-opposed-to-what factor” and, as you write, to continually ask yourself, “Who says otherwise?” and “Does anyone dispute it?” Behind the audience’s “Yeah, so?” and “Why is he telling us this?” in the first cartoon above lie precisely these types of “As opposed to what?” questions. The speaker in the second cartoon, we think, is more satisfying because he answers these questions, helping us see his point that the film presents complex characters rather than simple sexist stereotypes.

#### HOW IT’S DONE

Many accomplished writers make explicit “they say” moves to set up and motivate their own arguments. One famous example is Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” which consists almost entirely of King’s eloquent responses to a public statement by eight clergymen deploring the civil rights protests he was leading. The letter—which was written in 1963, while

King was in prison for leading a demonstration against racial injustice in Birmingham—is structured almost entirely around a framework of summary and response, in which King summarizes and then answers their criticisms. In one typical passage, King writes as follows.

You deplore the demonstrations taking place in Birmingham. But your statement, I am sorry to say, fails to express a similar concern for the conditions that brought about the demonstrations.

Marting Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

King goes on to agree with his critics that “It is unfortunate that demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham,” yet he hastens to add that “it is even more unfortunate that the city’s white power structure left the Negro community with no alternative.” King’s letter is so thoroughly conversational, in fact, that it could be rewritten in the form of a dialogue or play.

King’s critics:

King’s response:

Critics:

Response:

Clearly, King would not have written his famous letter were it not for his critics, whose views he treats not as objections to his already-formed arguments but as the motivating source of those arguments, their central reason for being. He quotes not only what his critics have said (“Some have asked: ‘Why didn’t you give the new city administration time to act?’”), but also things they might have said (“One may well ask: ‘How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?’”)—all to set the stage for what he himself wants to say.

A similar “they say / I say” exchange opens an essay about American patriotism by the social critic Katha Pollitt, who uses her own daughter’s comment to represent the patriotic national fervor after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

My daughter, who goes to Stuyvesant High School only blocks from the former World Trade Center, thinks we should fly the American flag out our window. Definitely not, I say: the flag stands for jingoism and vengeance and war. She tells me I’m wrong – the flag means standing together and honoring the dead and saying no to terrorism. In a way, we’re both right...

Katha Pollitt, “Put Out No Flags”

As Pollitt’s example shows, the “they” you respond to in crafting an argument need not be a famous author or someone known to your audience. It can be a family member like Pollitt’s daughter, or a friend or classmate who has made a provocative claim. It can even be something an individual or a group might say—or a side of yourself, something you once believed but no

longer do, or something you partly believe but also doubt. The important thing is that the “they” (or “you” or “she”) represent some wider group with which readers might identify—in Pollitt’s case, those who patriotically believe in flying the flag. Pollitt’s example also shows that responding to the views of others need not always involve unqualified opposition. By agreeing and disagreeing with her daughter, Pollitt enacts what we call the “yes and no” response, reconciling apparently incompatible views.

While King and Pollitt both identify the views they are responding to, some authors do not explicitly state their views but instead allow the reader to infer them. See, for instance, if you can identify the implied or unnamed “they say” that the following claim is responding to.

I like to think I have a certain advantage as a teacher of literature because when I was growing up I disliked and feared books.

Gerald Graff, “Disliking Books at an Early Age”

In case you haven’t figured it out already, the phantom “they say” here is the common belief that in order to be a good teacher of literature, one must have grown up liking and enjoying books.

#### COURT CONTROVERSY, BUT...

As you can see from these examples, many writers use the “they say / I say” format to challenge standard ways of thinking and thus to stir up controversy. This point may come as a shock to you if you have always had the impression that in order to succeed academically you need to play it safe and avoid controversy in your writing, making statements that nobody can possibly disagree with. Though this view of writing may appear logical, it is actually a recipe for flat, lifeless writing and for writing that fails to answer what we call the “so what?” and “who cares?” questions. “William Shakespeare wrote many famous plays and sonnets” may be a perfectly true statement, but precisely because nobody is likely to disagree with it, it goes without saying and thus would seem pointless if said.

But just because controversy is important doesn’t mean you have to become an attack dog who automatically disagrees with everything others say. We think this is an important point to underscore because some who are not familiar with this book have gotten the impression from the title that our goal is to train writers simply to disparage whatever “they say.”

#### DISAGREEING WITHOUT BEING DISAGREEABLE

There certainly are occasions when strong critique is needed. It’s hard to live in a deeply polarized society like our current one and not feel the need at times to criticize what others think. But even the most justified critiques fall flat, we submit, unless we really listen to and understand the views we are criticizing:

- ▶ While I understand the impulse to \_\_\_\_\_, my own view is \_\_\_\_\_.

Even the most sympathetic audiences, after all, tend to feel manipulated by arguments that scapegoat and caricature the other side.

Furthermore, genuinely listening to views we disagree with can have the salutary effect of helping us see that beliefs we'd initially disdained may not be as thoroughly reprehensible as we'd imagined. Thus the type of "they say / I say" argument that we promote in this book can take the form of agreeing up to a point or, as the Pollitt example above illustrates, of both agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously, as in:

- ▶ While I agree with X that \_\_\_\_\_, I cannot accept her over-all conclusion that \_\_\_\_\_.
- ▶ While X argues \_\_\_\_\_, and I argue \_\_\_\_\_, in a way we're both right.

Agreement cannot be ruled out, however:

- ▶ I agree with \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_.

### THE TEMPLATE OF TEMPLATES

There are many ways, then, to enter a conversation and respond to what "they say." But our discussion of ways to do so would be incomplete were we not to mention the most comprehensive way that writers enter conversations, which incorporates all the major moves discussed in this book:

- ▶ In recent discussions of \_\_\_\_\_, a controversial issue has been whether \_\_\_\_\_. On the one hand, some argue that \_\_\_\_\_. From this perspective, \_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, however, others argue that \_\_\_\_\_. In the words of \_\_\_\_\_, one of this view's main proponents, "\_\_\_\_\_." According to this view, \_\_\_\_\_. In sum, then, the issue is whether \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.  
My own view is that \_\_\_\_\_. Though I concede that \_\_\_\_\_, I still maintain that \_\_\_\_\_. For example, \_\_\_\_\_. Although some might object that \_\_\_\_\_, I would reply that \_\_\_\_\_. The issue is important because \_\_\_\_\_.

This "template of templates," as we like to call it, represents the internal DNA of countless articles and even entire books. Writers commonly use a version of it not only to stake out their

“they say” and “I say” at the start of their manuscript, but—just as important—to form the overarching blueprint that structures what they write over the entire length of their text.

Taking it line by line, this master template first helps you open your text by identifying an issue in some ongoing conversation or debate (“In recent discussions of \_\_\_\_\_, a controversial issue has been \_\_\_\_\_”), and then to map some of the voices in this controversy (by using the “on the one hand / on the other hand” structure). The template then helps you introduce a quotation (“In the words of \_\_\_\_\_”), to explain the quotation in your own words (“According to this view”), and—in a new paragraph—to state your own argument (“My own view is that”), to qualify your argument (“Though I concede that”), and then to support your argument with evidence (“For example”). In addition, the template helps you make one of the most crucial moves in argumentative writing, what we call “planting a naysayer in your text,” in which you summarize and then answer a likely objection to your own central claim (“Although it might be objected that \_\_\_\_\_, I reply \_\_\_\_\_”). Finally, this template helps you shift between general, over-arching claims (“In sum, then”) and smaller-scale, supporting claims (“For example”).

Again, none of us is born knowing these moves, especially when it comes to academic writing. Hence the need for this book...

#### PUTTING IN YOUR OAR

Though the immediate goal of this book is to help you become a better writer, at a deeper level it invites you to become a certain type of person: a critical, intellectual thinker who, instead of sitting passively on the sidelines, can participate in the debates and conversations of your world in an active and empowered way. Ultimately, this book invites you to become a critical thinker who can enter the types of conversations described eloquently by the philosopher Kenneth Burke in the following widely cited passage. Likening the world of intellectual exchange to a never-ending conversation at a party, Burke writes:

You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about... You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you... The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.

Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form*

What we like about this passage is its suggestion that stating an argument (putting in your oar) can only be done in conversation with others; that entering the dynamic world of ideas must be done not as isolated individuals but as social beings deeply connected to others.

This ability to enter complex, many-sided conversations has taken on a special urgency in today's polarized, Red State / Blue State America, where the future for all of us may depend on our ability to put ourselves in the shoes of those who think very differently from us. The central piece of advice in this book—that we listen carefully to others, including those who disagree with us, and then engage with them thoughtfully and respectfully—can help us see beyond our own pet beliefs, which may not be shared by everyone. The mere act of crafting a sentence that begins “Of course, someone might object that ” may not seem like a way to change the world; but it does have the potential to jog us out of our comfort zones, to get us thinking critically about our own beliefs, and even to change minds, our own included.

## **Fourteen**

### **“What’s Motivating This Writer?”**

#### ***Reading for the Conversation***

“What is the author’s argument? What is he or she trying to say?” For many years, these were the first questions we would ask our classes in a discussion of an assigned reading. The discussion that resulted was often halting, as our students struggled to get a handle on the argument, but eventually, after some awkward silences, the class would come up with something we could all agree was an accurate summary of the author’s main thesis. Even after we’d gotten over that hurdle, however, the discussion would often still seem forced, and would limp along as we all struggled with the question that naturally arose next: now that we had determined what the author was saying, what did we ourselves have to say?

For a long time we didn’t worry much about these halting discussions, justifying them to ourselves as the predictable result of assigning difficult, challenging readings. Several years ago, however, as we started writing this book and began thinking about writing as the art of entering conversations, we latched on to the idea of leading with some different questions: “What other argument(s) is the writer responding to?” “Is the writer disagreeing or agreeing with something, and if so, what?” “What is motivating the writer’s argument?” “Are there other ideas that you have encountered in this class or elsewhere that might be pertinent?” The results were often striking. The discussions that followed tended to be far livelier and to draw in a greater number of students. We were still asking them to see that argument as a response to some other argument that provoked it, gave it a reason for being, and helped all of us see why we should care about it.

What had happened, we realized, was that by changing the opening question, we changed the way our students approached reading and perhaps the way they thought about academic work

in general. Instead of thinking of the argument of a text as an isolated entity, they now thought of that argument as one that responded to and provoked other arguments. Since they were now dealing not with *one* argument but at least *two* (the author's argument and the one[s] being responded to), they now had alternative ways of seeing the topic at hand. This meant that instead of just trying to understand the view presented by the author, they were more able to question that view intelligently and engage in the type of discussion and debate that is the hallmark of a college education. In our discussions, animated debates often arose between students who found the author's argument convincing and others who were more convinced by the view it was challenging. In the best of these debates, the binary positions would be questioned by other students, who suggested each was too simple, that both might be right or that a third alternative was possible. Still other students might object that the discussion thus far had missed the author's real point and suggest that we all go back to the text and pay closer attention to what it actually said.

We eventually realized that the move from reading for the author's argument in isolation to reading for how the author's argument is in conversation with the arguments of others helps readers become active, critical readers rather than passive recipients of knowledge. On some level, reading for the conversation is more rigorous and demanding than reading for what one author says. It asks that you determine not only what the author thinks but also how what the author thinks fits in with what others think and ultimately what you yourself think. Yet on another level, reading this way is a lot simpler and more familiar than reading for the thesis alone, since it returns writing to the familiar, everyday act of communicating with other people about real issues.

### DECIPHERING THE CONVERSATION

We suggest, then, that when assigned a reading, you imagine the author not as sitting alone in an empty room hunched over a desk or staring at a screen but as sitting in a crowded coffee shop talking to and engaging with others who are making claims. In other words, imagine an ongoing, multisided conversation in which all of the participants (including the author) are trying to persuade others to agree or at least to take their positions seriously.

The trick in reading for the conversation is to figure out *what views the author is responding to* and *what the author's own argument is* – or, to put it in the terms used in this book, to determine the “they say” and how the author responds to it. One of the challenges in reading for the “they say” and “I say” can be figuring out which is which, since it may not be obvious when writers are summarizing others and when they are speaking for themselves. Readers need to be alert for any changes in voice that a writer might make, since instead of using explicit road-mapping phrases like “although many believe,” authors may simply summarize the view that they want to engage with and indicate only subtly that it is not their own.

Consider the opening to an article by David Zinczenko:

If ever there were a newspaper headline custom-made for Jay Leno's monologue, this was it. Kids taking on McDonald's this week, suing the company for making them fat. Isn't that like middle-aged men suing Porsche for making them get speeding tickets? Whatever happened to personal responsibility?

I tend to sympathize with these portly fast-food patrons, though. Maybe that's because I used to be one of them.

David Zinczenko, "Don't Blame the Eater"

Whenever we teach this passage, some students inevitably assume that Zinczenko must be espousing the view expressed in his first paragraph: that suing McDonald's is ridiculous. When their reading is challenged by classmates, these students point to the page and reply, "Look. It's right there on the page. This is what Zinczenko wrote. These are his exact words." The assumption these students are making is that if something appears on the page, the author must endorse it. In fact, however, we ventriloquize views that we don't believe in, and may in fact passionately disagree with, all the time. The central clues that Zinczenko disagrees with the view expressed in his opening paragraph come in the second paragraph, when he finally offers a first-person declaration and uses a contrastive transition, "though," thereby resolving any questions about where he stands.

#### WHEN THE "THEY SAY" IS UNSTATED

Another challenge can be identifying the "they say" when it is not explicitly identified. Whereas Zinczenko offers an up-front summary of the view he is responding to, other writers assume that their readers are so familiar with these views that they need not name or summarize them. In such cases, you the reader have to reconstruct the unstated "they say" that is motivating the text through a process of inference.

See, for instance, if you can reconstruct the position that Tamara Draut is challenging in the opening paragraph of her essay "The Growing College Gap":

"The first in her family to graduate from college." How many times have we heard that phrase, or one like it, used to describe a successful American with a modest background? In today's United States, a four-year degree has become the all-but-official ticket to middle class security. But if your parents don't have much money or higher education in their own right, the road to college – and beyond – looks increasingly treacherous. Despite a sharp increase in the proportion of high school graduates going on to some form of postsecondary education, socio-economic status continues to exert a powerful influence on college admission and completion; in fact, gaps in enrollment by class and race, after declining in the 1960s and 1970s, are once

again as wide as they were thirty years ago, and getting wider, even as college has become far more crucial to lifetime fortunes.

Tamara Draut, "The Growing College Gap"

You might think that the "they say" here is embedded in the third sentence: they say (or we all think) that a four-year degree is "the all-but-official ticket to middle-class security," and you might assume that Draut will go on to disagree.

If you read the passage this way, however, you would be mistaken. Draut is not questioning whether a college degree has become the "ticket to middle-class security" but whether most Americans can obtain that ticket, whether college is within the financial reach of most American families. You may have been thrown off by the "but" following the statement that college has become a prerequisite for middle-class security. However, unlike the "though" in Zinzchenko's opening, this "but" does not signal that Draut will be disagreeing with the view she just summarized, a view that in fact she takes as a given. What Draut disagrees with is that this ticket to middle-class security is still readily available to the middle and working classes.

Were one to imagine Draut in a room talking with others with strong views on this topic, one would need to picture her challenging not those who think college is a ticket to financial security (something she agrees with and takes for granted) but those who think the doors of college are open to anyone willing to put forth the effort to walk through them. The view that Draut is challenging, then, is not summarized in her opening. Instead, she assumes that readers are already so familiar with this view that it need not be stated.

Draut's example suggests that in texts where the central "they say" is not immediately identified, you have to construct it yourself based on the clues the text provides. You have to start by locating the writer's thesis and then imagine some of the arguments that might be made against it. What would it look like to disagree with this view? In Draut's case, it is relatively easy to construct a counterargument: it is the familiar faith in the American Dream of equal opportunity when it comes to access to college. Figuring out the counterargument not only reveals what motivated Draut as a writer but also helps you to respond to her essay as an active, critical reader. Constructing this counterargument can also help you recognize how Draut challenges your own views, questioning opinions that you previously took for granted.

#### WHEN THE "THEY SAY" IS ABOUT SOMETHING "NOBODY HAS TALKED ABOUT"

Another challenge in reading for the conversation is that writers sometimes build their arguments by responding to a *lack* of discussion. These writers build their case not by playing off views that can be identified (like faith in the American Dream or the idea that we are responsible for our body weight) but by pointing to something that others have overlooked. As the writing theorists John M. Swales and Christine B. Feak point out, one effective way to

“create a research space” and “establish a niche” in the academic world is “by indicating a gap in... previous research.” Much research in the sciences and humanities takes this “Nobody has noticed X” form.

In such cases, the writer may be responding to scientists, for example, who have overlooked an obscure plant that offers insights into global warming or to literary critics who have been so busy focusing on the lead character in a play that they have overlooked something important about the minor characters.

### READING PARTICULARLY CHALLENGING TEXTS

Sometimes it is difficult to figure out the views that writers are responding to, not because these writers do not identify those views but because their language and the concepts they are dealing with are particularly challenging. Consider, for instance, the first two sentences of *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, a book by the feminist philosopher and literary theorist Judith Butler, thought by many to be a particularly difficult academic writer:

Contemporary feminist debates over the meaning of gender lead time and again to a certain sense of trouble, as if the indeterminacy of gender might eventually culminate in the failure of feminism. Perhaps trouble need not carry such a negative valence.

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*

There are many reasons readers may stumble over this relatively short passage, not the least of which is that Butler does not explicitly indicate where her own view begins and the view she is responding to ends. Unlike Zinzhenko, Butler does not use the first-person “I” or a phrase such as “in my own view” to show that the position in the second sentence is her own. Nor does Butler offer a clear transition such as “but” or “however” at the start of the second sentence to indicate, as Zinzhenko does with “though,” that in the second sentence she is questioning the argument she has summarized in the first. And finally, like many academic writers, Butler uses abstract, challenging words that many readers may need to look up, like “indeterminacy” (the quality of being impossible to define or pin down), “culminate” (finally result in), and “negative valence” (a term borrowed from chemistry, roughly denoting “negative significance” or “meaning”). For all these reasons, we can imagine many readers feeling intimidated before they reach the third sentence of Butler’s book.

But readers who break down this passage into its essential parts will find that is actually a lucid piece of writing that conforms to the classic “they say / I say” pattern. Though it can be difficult to spot the clashing arguments in the two sentences, close analysis reveals that the first sentence offers a way of looking at a certain type of “trouble” in the realm of feminist politics that is being challenged in the second.

To understand difficult passages of this kind, you need to translate them into your own words – to build a bridge, in effect, between the passage’s unfamiliar terms and ones more familiar to you. Building such a bridge should help you connect what you already know to what the author is saying – and will then help you move from reading to writing, providing you with some of the language you will need to summarize the text. One major challenge in translating the author’s words into your own, however, is to stay true to what the author is actually saying, avoiding what we call the “closest cliché syndrome,” in which one mistakes a commonplace idea for an author’s more complex one (mistaking Butler’s critique of the concept of “woman,” for instance, for the common idea that women must have equal rights). The work of complex writers like Butler, who frequently challenge conventional thinking, cannot always be condensed into the types of ideas most of us are already familiar with. Therefore, when you translate, do not try to fit the ideas of such writers into your preexisting beliefs, but instead allow your own views to be challenged. In building a bridge to the writers you read, it is often necessary to meet those writers more than halfway.

So what, then, does Butler’s opening say? Translating Butler’s words into terms that are easier to understand, we can see that the first sentence says that for many feminists today, “the indeterminacy of gender” – the inability to define the essence of sexual identity – spells the end of feminism; that for many feminists the inability define “gender,” presumably the building block of the feminist movement, means serious “trouble” for feminist politics. In contrast, the second sentence suggests that this same “trouble” need not be thought of in such “negative” terms, that the inability to define femininity, or “gender trouble” as Butler calls it in her book’s title, may not be such a bad thing – and, as she goes on to argue in the pages that follow, may even be something that feminist activists can profit from. In other words, Butler suggests, highlighting uncertainties about masculinity and femininity can be a powerful feminist tool.

Pulling all these inferences together, then, the opening sentences can be translated as follows: “While many contemporary feminists believe that uncertainty about what it means to be a woman will undermine feminist politics, I, Judith Butler, believe that this uncertainty can actually help strengthen feminist politics.” Translating Butler’s point into our own book’s basic move: “They say that if we cannot define ‘woman,’ feminism is in big trouble. But I say that this type of trouble is precisely what feminism needs.” Despite its difficulty, then, we hope you agree that this initially intimidating passage does make sense if you stay with it.

We hope it is clear that critical reading is a two-way street. It is just as much about being open to the way that writers can challenge you, maybe even transform you, as it is about questioning those writers. And if you translate a writer’s argument into your own words as you read, you should allow the text to take you outside the ideas that you already hold and to introduce you to new terms and concepts. Even if you end up disagreeing with an author, you first have to

show that you have really listened to what is being said, have fully grasped the arguments, and can accurately summarize those arguments. Without such deep, attentive listening, any critique you make will be superficial and decidedly *uncritical*. It will be a critique that says more about you than about the writer or idea you're supposedly responding to.

In this chapter we have tried to show that reading for the conversation means looking not just for the thesis of a text in isolation but for the view or views that motivate that thesis – the “they say.” We have also tried to show that reading for the conversation means being alert for the different strategies writers use to engage the view(s) that are motivating them, since not all writers engage other perspectives in the same way. Some writers explicitly identify and summarize a view they are responding to at the outset of their text and then return to it frequently as their text unfolds. Some refer only obliquely to a view that is motivating them, assuming that readers will be able to reconstruct that view on their own. Other writers may not explicitly distinguish their own view from the views they are questioning in ways that all of us find clear, leaving some readers to wonder whether a given view is the writer's own or one that is being challenged. And some writers push off against the “they say” that is motivating them in a challenging academic language that requires readers to translate what they are saying into more accessible, everyday terms. In sum, then, though most persuasive writers do follow a conversational “they say / I say” pattern, they do so in a great variety of ways. What this means for readers is that they need to be armed with various strategies for detecting the conversations in what they read, even when those conversations are not self-evident.

## Appendix B

### From “Go Ahead, Laugh!”

By Patrick Malone (*Public Management*, Vol. 98, Issue 6, July 2016)

Humor in the workplace can be a double-edged sword. It pre-supposes a balance of taste, timing, and intellect. For some reason though, organizations still exist where humor is seen as detrimental to professionalism.

Laughter can be met with a look of scorn and disapproval, and those that engage in such frivolity are seen as less-than-serious, less-than-committed, or less-than-capable contributors to the mission of the work at hand...

According to Alison Beard in her 2014 *Harvard Business Review* article “Leading with Humor,” a 40-year-old adult laughs [just] four times per day, despite exposure to a much greater array of stimuli [than a young child]. Sadly, we laugh less as we age.

A 2002 study of 2,500 Australians concluded that more than half would take a cut in wages in order to have more fun at work.<sup>1</sup> Research by Gallup also suggested that people who are not engaged in their workplace laugh less during the workweek than during the weekends.<sup>2</sup>...

So is it possible to have both a committed workforce and one that has a little fun at the office? Yes. Is there a differentiation to be made between having a sober disposition and having a little fun while you do your job? There is.

The former can create a host of problems in the workplace. The latter can bring significant benefits to the body, mind, and organization...

In a purely anatomical and physiological context, laughter is a full-body endeavor...This physiological symphony improves the immune function by increasing immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies. In one study published in *The American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, Lee Berk of Loma Linda University and William Fry of Stanford drew on several years of research to assess whether laughter impacted the body’s ability to manufacture cortisol, a hormone known to suppress immune function.<sup>3</sup> They determined that laughter actually increased the production of cells that help the body to fight infection.

Healthy laughter can also improve the elasticity and function of blood vessels, protecting against cardiovascular disease. Medical researchers Michael Miller and William Fry at the University of Maryland’s School of Medicine, for example, have had success in linking laughter to increasing blood flow.<sup>4</sup> Their results strongly suggest that laughter has an impact on the endothelium, the tissue that makes up the inner lining of blood vessels, allowing it to more readily dilate and expand, increasing blood flow to the heart, lungs, and brain...

According to research at Stanford, a hefty dose of humor also helps the brain normalize

dopamine levels, which has positive effects on motivation, attention span, mood, and learning. Researchers discovered that when participants looked at funny cartoons, components of the limbic system were stimulated that regulate this important neurotransmitter.<sup>5</sup>...

Finally, the production of endorphins created by laughter benefits our minds by allowing us to focus more readily on the tasks at hand. By reducing stress levels and enhancing our stores of mental energy, laughter permits our minds to free up from previously overwhelming thoughts and emotions. The resultant balance of mind, body, and emotion opens the door to inspiration, hope, and engagement with others...

Nowhere is the role of humor and laughter tested more intensely than in the workplace. The combination of deadlines, external pressures, and personality conflicts make for a less-than-optimal setting for comedic repartee. The benefits of laughter in the workplace, however, are significant.

Laughter in an organization is a guaranteed morale booster that can build trust. People enjoy coming to work when they feel connected to those with whom they serve, and when they feel good while they're there... Shared laughter allows people to be comfortable letting their guard down and showing their authentic selves. This window to vulnerability is a foundation for building trust.

An environment infused with humor can also increase innovation. One study by Chris Robert at the University of Missouri-Columbia revealed that humor is something that is generated from inconsistency, meaning that people are more likely to laugh at things that do not normally fit together.<sup>6</sup> The very combination of words or deeds that don't customarily tie with one another stirs a reaction. As Robert notes, this is the same thing that occurs in the creative mind—putting variables together that do not normally belong that way. It's the foundation of creativity from which so many organizations can benefit.

Robert also goes on to suggest that productivity and employee retention is positively impacted by humor. Since humor leads to positive emotions, and positive emotions make individuals feel good, they naturally communicate better, become more committed team members, and work harder. This also improves retention since happy, productive workers are less likely to leave their jobs...

Finally, a 2012 study published in the *Journal of Managerial Psychology* revealed a comprehensive listing of organizational benefits to workplace humor.<sup>7</sup> This research concluded that humor is connected with several positive workplace outcomes, including improved performance, enhanced employee satisfaction, better workgroup cohesion, healthier employees, less burnout, and reduced stress...

Laughter is still somewhat of a mystery to modern science. This is partly due to the challenges in creating the proper scientifically sound settings in which to test the impacts of humor. Controlled environments aren't always the most conducive to natural reactions. After all, if

laughter is nothing else, it is a natural reaction.

- <sup>1</sup> Rogers, J. (2002). "Humor Helps the Boss's Bottom Line." *The Gold Coast Bulletin*.
- <sup>2</sup> Harter, Jim. (2012). "Mondays Not so Blue for Engaged Employees." Gallup.
- <sup>3</sup> Berk, L. S. et al. (1989). "Neuroendocrine and Stress Hormone Changes during Mirthful Laughter." *The American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, Vol.298(6).
- <sup>4</sup> Miller, M. and Fry, W.F. (2009). "The Effect of Mirthful Laughter on the Human Cardiovascular System." *Med Hypotheses*, Vol. 73(5).
- <sup>5</sup> Mobbs, D, et al. (2003). "Humor Modulates the Mesolimbic Reward Centers." *Neuron*, Vol. 40(5).
- <sup>6</sup> Robert, C. and Yan, W. (2007). "The Case for Developing New Research on Humor and Culture in Organizations: Toward a Higher Grade of Manure," in Joseph J. Martocchio (ed.) *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*. Vol. 26.
- <sup>7</sup> Mesmer Magnus, J., Glew, D.J., and Viswesvaran, C. (2012) "A Meta Analysis of Positive Humor in the Workplace." *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 27(2).

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## Appendix C

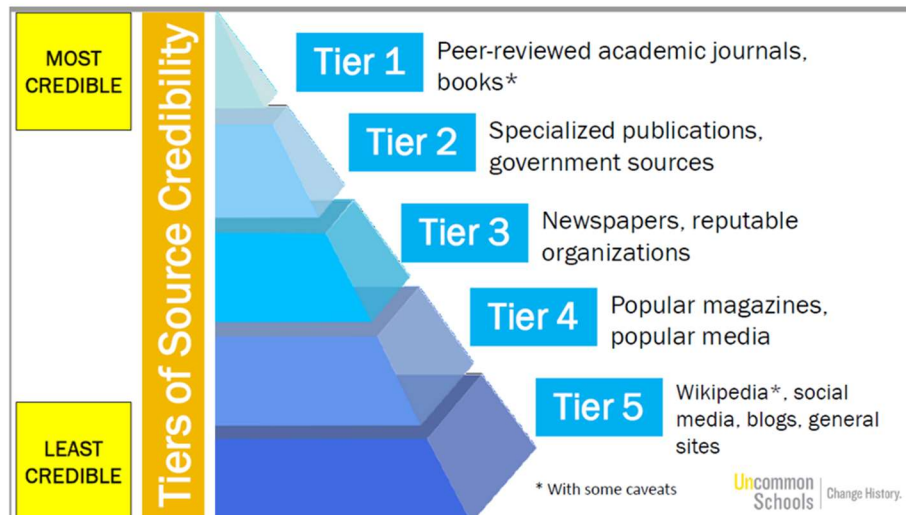
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### Credibility Tier Chart

**\*Caveats:**

Books may be a representation of a particular perspective, but the author's credibility may need to be separately established

Wikipedia may contain useful sources of information that can be investigated further.



## Appendix D

### AP Capstone™ Policy on Plagiarism and Falsification or Fabrication of Information

Participating teachers shall inform students of the consequences of plagiarism and instruct students to ethically use and acknowledge the ideas and work of others throughout their course work. The student's individual voice should be clearly evident, and the ideas of others must be acknowledged, attributed, and/or cited.

A student who fails to acknowledge the source or author of any and all information or evidence taken from the work of someone else through citation, attribution or reference in the body of the work, or through a bibliographic entry, will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Seminar and/or AP Research Performance Task. In AP Seminar, a team of students that fails to properly acknowledge sources or authors on the Team Multimedia Presentation will receive a group score of 0 for that component of the Team Project and Presentation.

A student who incorporates falsified or fabricated information (e.g. evidence, data, sources, and/or authors) will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Seminar and/or AP Research Performance Task. In AP Seminar, a team of students that incorporates falsified or fabricated information in the Team Multimedia Presentation will receive a group score of 0 for that component of the Team Project and Presentation.

### AP Capstone Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

#### DEFINITION OF GENERATIVE AI IN AP CAPSTONE COURSES

Generative AI tools use predictive technology to produce new text, charts, images, audio, video, etc. This includes not only ChatGPT and similar Large Language Models (LLMs), but also many writing assistants or plug-ins that are built on this or similar AI technologies.

#### POLICY ON ACCEPTABLE GENERATIVE AI USE IN AP CAPSTONE COURSES

Generative AI tools must be used ethically, responsibly, and intentionally to support student learning, not to bypass it. Accordingly, all performance tasks submitted in AP Seminar and AP Research must be the student's own work. While students are permitted to use generative AI tools consistent with this policy, their use is optional and not mandatory.

Students can use generative AI tools as optional aids for exploration of potential topics of inquiry, initial searches for sources of information, confirming their understanding of a complex text, or checking their writing — but not rewriting — for grammar and tone. However, students must read primary and secondary sources directly, perform their own analysis and synthesis of evidence, and make their own choices on how to communicate effectively both in their writing and presentations. Students may not use generative AI tools to write or create their assignments for them. It remains the student's responsibility to engage deeply with credible, valid sources and integrate diverse perspectives when working on the performance tasks. Students must complete interim "checkpoints" with their teacher to demonstrate genuine engagement with the tasks.

The following table describes what constitutes acceptable use of generative AI at different phases of the work to complete the performance tasks.

| Phase of Work                                                                                 | Acceptable Use                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Not Acceptable Use                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Exploring ideas to develop and refine an area of inquiry                                      | Using generative AI tools to get a sense of existing debates on an issue, potential sub-topics, or what is generally already widely known about a topic.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Taking the output of generative AI tools uncritically, such as using AI to generate a research question or thesis, without engaging with the actual research or relying solely on generative AI as a source of information about a topic                                                                                                   |
| Finding sources                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Using generative AI to find authors, organizations, publications, or sources that may be pertinent to the area of inquiry, so that the student can then locate and read those perspectives directly.</li> <li>› Asking for recommendations on related sources to further explore the topic or address gaps in research.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Not all AI tools are the same in terms of the likelihood they will provide output with credible sources. For example, AI-powered search engines for research databases draw from vetted sources, whereas ChatGPT does not necessarily differentiate. Students must review output with a skeptical, critical eye to be sure any suggested sources are real, credible, and relevant to their inquiry.</p> | Using a list of sources generated by AI without going to the original sources and reviewing the content.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Summarizing and/or interpreting sources                                                       | <p>Using generative AI to help develop understanding of complex texts by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Requesting help with understanding complex vocabulary or sentence structures in a source.</li> <li>› Asking for clarification on a confusing concept or passage in a source.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Students should always read the original text of the sources they intend to use to ensure they are accurately understanding and utilizing the evidence from those sources in their work</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Generating a summary or paraphrasing of the source instead of reading it.</li> <li>› Requesting direct quotes or citations from a source to use as evidence without independently identifying them.</li> <li>› Copying and pasting AI generated source summaries into the final draft.</li> </ul> |
| Synthesizing ideas and information from sources into a literature review, report, or argument | <p>No acceptable use.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Students will be asked questions in either their PREP-based in-progress meetings (AP Research) or in the checkpoints (AP Seminar) to ensure they have done this work themselves.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>Asking generative AI to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Compare or contrast sources and/or generate a review of literature.</li> <li>› Synthesize common or contrasting elements from within a source or across multiple sources.</li> <li>› Develop statements or paragraphs that put sources in conversation</li> </ul> |

| Phase of Work                                                      | Acceptable Use                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Not Acceptable Use                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Developing an aligned method for their Research (AP Research only) | Summarizing commonly used methods in discipline-specific fields or reviewing benefits and drawbacks of different generic methods or methodologies.<br><br><b>NOTE:</b> Students will be asked questions in their PREP-based in-progress meetings (AP Research) to ensure that they have done this work themselves.                                                               | Using generative AI to determine the appropriate method for an individual student's research and/or providing rationales for a specific method.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Producing, summarizing and/or interpreting data (AP Research only) | No acceptable use.<br><br><b>NOTE:</b> Students will be asked questions in their PREP-based in-progress meetings (AP Research) to ensure that they have done this work themselves.                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using generative AI to generate data (this would count as falsified and/or fabricated data). <i>The only exception would be if use of generative AI tools is the subject of the inquiry. In this case, using generative AI to generate data would be part of the method.</i></li> <li>Using AI to summarize or discuss their results or data.</li> </ul> |
| Developing displays of data (AP Research only)                     | Using generative AI to create charts/graphs or other representations of data collected and assembled by the student.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Using generative AI to produce or generate the data itself. <i>See exception noted above.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Drafting or outlining a paper                                      | Seeking guidance on general best practices in how to structure a research paper, essay, or report<br><br><b>NOTE:</b> Students will be asked questions (on the reasoning underpinning their choices for structure and content) in either their PREP-based in-progress meetings (AP Research) or the checkpoints (AP Seminar) to ensure that they have done this work themselves. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking generative AI to produce an outline or draft of a specific paper.</li> <li>Requesting generative AI to write all or part of the paper.</li> <li>Using writing generated by AI in the final draft.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                      |
| Revising a paper                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using spell or grammar checkers.</li> <li>Asking for feedback on style and tone (students must make deliberate choices on what feedback to incorporate).</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accepting AI-generated suggestions for revisions of written work without critically evaluating such contributions.</li> <li>Incorporating into student submissions new sections of text suggested by generative AI.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           |
| Creating Citations / Bibliography                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seeking guidance on how to cite or check citations.</li> <li>Generating a draft of the bibliographic listing of citations or checking the format of a student-generated draft of the bibliographic listing of citations.</li> </ul>                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using AI to generate citations without having directly studied the original sources.</li> <li>Relying on generative AI to create the bibliographic listing of citations without then checking the accuracy of the format.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                     |

| Phase of Work              | Acceptable Use                                                                                                                                                                                   | Not Acceptable Use                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Developing Presentations   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seeking general guidance on effective presentations.</li> <li>Generating initial ideas for key points, sequence, or visuals for presentations.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncritically using AI to produce the key points, visuals, or structure for presentations.</li> <li>Using AI to generate a script that is memorized or read for the presentation.</li> </ul> |
| Preparing for Oral Defense | No acceptable use.                                                                                                                                                                               | Using AI to generate possible answers to potential oral defense questions (and memorizing or reading them).                                                                                                                        |

### REQUIRED CHECKPOINTS AND AFFIRMATIONS

To ensure students are not using generative AI to bypass work, students must complete interim “checkpoints” with their teacher to demonstrate genuine engagement with the tasks. **AP Seminar and AP Research students will need to complete the relevant checkpoints successfully to receive a score for their performance tasks. Teachers must affirm, to the best of their knowledge, that students completed the checkpoints authentically in the AP Digital Portfolio. Failure to complete the checkpoints will result in a score of zero on the associated task.**

- In AP Seminar, teachers assess the authenticity of student work based on checkpoints that take the form of short conversations with students during which students make their thinking and decision-making visible (similar to an oral defense). These checkpoints should occur during the sources and research phase (IRR and IWA), and argument outline phase (IWA only).
- In AP Research, students must complete “checkpoints” in the form of in-progress meetings and work in the Process and Reflection Portfolio (PREP).

AP Seminar and AP Research teachers are also required to affirm, to the best of their knowledge, that the student’s final submission is authentic student work.

College Board reserves the right to investigate submissions where there is evidence of the inappropriate use of generative AI as an academic integrity violation and request from students copies of their interim work for review.