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# AP Research Academic Paper

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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**AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2017 SCORING GUIDELINES**  
**Performance Task Rubric: Academic Paper**

Content Area	Performance Levels		
<b>1 Understand and Analyze Context</b>	The paper identifies a broad topic of inquiry and/or a purpose.  2	The paper identifies a focused topic of inquiry and describes the purpose.  4	The paper explains the topic, purpose, and focus of the inquiry and why further investigation of the topic is needed by connecting it to the larger discipline, field, and/or scholarly community.  6
<b>2 Understand and Analyze Argument</b>	The paper identifies or cites previous scholarly works and/or summarizes a single perspective on the student's topic of inquiry.  2	The paper summarizes, individually, previous scholarly works representing multiple perspectives about the student's topic of inquiry.  4	The paper explains the relationships among multiple scholarly works representing multiple perspectives, describing the connection to the student's topic of inquiry.  6
<b>3 Evaluate Sources and Evidence</b>	The paper uses sources/evidence that are unsubstantiated as relevant and/or credible for the purpose of the inquiry.  2	The paper uses credible and relevant sources/evidence suited to the purpose of the inquiry.  4	The paper explains the relevance and significance of the used sources/cited evidence by connecting them to the student's topic of inquiry.  6
<b>4 Research Design</b>	The paper presents a summary of the approach, method, or process, but the summary is oversimplified.  3	The paper describes in detail a replicable approach, method, or process.  5	The paper provides a logical rationale for the research design by explaining the alignment between the chosen approach, method, or process and the research question/project goal.  7
<b>5 Establish Argument</b>	The paper presents an understanding, argument, or conclusion, but it is simplistic or inconsistent, and/or it provides unsupported or illogical links between the evidence and the claim(s).  3	The paper presents a new understanding, argument, or conclusion that the paper justifies by explaining the links between evidence and claims derived from the student's research.  5	The paper presents a new understanding, argument, or conclusion that acknowledges and explains the limitations and implications in context.  7
<b>6 Select and Use Evidence</b>	Evidence is presented, but it is insufficient or sometimes inconsistent in supporting the paper's conclusion or understanding.  2	The paper supports its conclusion by compiling relevant and sufficient evidence generated by the student's research.  4	The paper demonstrates an effective argument through interpretation and synthesis of the evidence generated by the student's research, while describing its relevance and significance.  6
<b>7 Engage Audience</b>	Organizational and design elements are present, but sometimes distract from communication or are superfluous.  1	Organizational and design elements convey the paper's message.  2	Organizational and design elements engage the audience, effectively emphasize the paper's message and demonstrate the credibility of the writer.  3
<b>8 Apply Conventions</b>	The paper cites and attributes the work of others, but does so inconsistently and/or incorrectly.  2	The paper consistently and accurately cites and attributes the work of others.  4	The paper effectively integrates the knowledge and ideas of others and consistently distinguishes between the student's voice and that of others.  6
<b>9 Apply Conventions</b>	The paper's use of grammar, style and mechanics convey the student's ideas; however, errors interfere with communication.  1	The paper's word choice and syntax adheres to established conventions of grammar, usage and mechanics. There may be some errors, but they do not interfere with the author's meaning.  2	The paper's word choice and syntax enhances communication through variety, emphasis, and precision.  3

**NOTE:** To receive the highest performance level presumes that the student also achieved the preceding performance levels in that row.

**ADDITIONAL SCORES:** In addition to the scores represented on the rubric, readers can also assign scores of **0** (zero).

- A score of **0** is assigned to a single row of the rubric when the paper displays a below-minimum level of quality as identified in that row of the rubric.

# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2017 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Academic Paper

### Overview

This performance task was intended to assess students' ability to conduct scholarly and responsible research and articulate an evidence-based argument that clearly communicates the conclusion, solution, or answer to their stated research question. More specifically, this performance task was intended to assess students' ability to:

- Generate a focused research question that is situated within or connected to a larger scholarly context or community;
- Explore relationships between and among multiple works representing multiple perspectives within the scholarly literature related to the topic of inquiry;
- Articulate what approach, method, or process they have chosen to use to address their research question, why they have chosen that approach to answering their question, and how they employed it;
- Develop and present their own argument, conclusion, or new understanding while acknowledging its limitations and discussing implications;
- Support their conclusion through the compilation, use, and synthesis of relevant and significant evidence generated by their research;
- Use organizational and design elements to effectively convey the paper's message;
- Consistently and accurately cite, attribute, and integrate the knowledge and work of others, while distinguishing between the student's voice and that of others;
- Generate a paper in which word choice and syntax enhance communication by adhering to established conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

# Literature Review

Millions of students don't know what to do after high school because their dream college/university is way too expensive and can't afford it . Some student look into their on the athletic life and some into their education but many people still can't afford to go to their dream college goals . What if there was a way that you still get the same education the same degree but in a way more cheaper price and still considered a professional degree.

Is it really necessary to go to a expensive college? How do students feel about knowing they can't afford to go to their college dreams not because they don't get accepted but because they just can't afford it .There is an article in New York Times that talk about if it's necessary to go to a expensive college to be well off financially after college . Many colleges or universities are way too expensive for the average person to afford. At first i tough that going a expensive college was giving a better future .sure it can give you good connection because it's a noticeable university/college but it really just depends on how well you like your career and how you focus on it .you can go to affordable and still be able to follow the same path.For example there was a boy who was thrown in jail due to his inability to pay off his loan . The article is called “ "A 'necessary' of modern life?"”this actually still happens, you are in debt for attending a expensive college and what if your degree didn't work out . Then what ? In many cases students are in such a financial issue that they are not even able to afford fro their homes. If a student can barely afford to pay rent how does the school expect them to pay these debts with such high interest. Many people now ask themselves is it really worth it ?just think it this way. There is

harvard which is acceptance rate is 5.4% and their fees is around forty thousand . You want to apply there you qualify but you don't have the money . You want to go there because it's a famous and different school not in education but in like the experience .are you going to be in debt just because of experience.harvard has biology, math,engineering,English (common classes ). You other choice could be sterling college where their acceptance rate is 44.6 and their fee is twenty one thousand which is a lot of money but still affordable.they have the same classes and people are nice too but are you really going to choose Harvard just because it's more noticeable. They are around twenty thousand dollars difference .it's a lot you can buy a car with that money .

There are many colleges who are famous for their quality education and being the at the top of education rankings. A good reputation about their school on how good their teachers are and how wonderful it is to be in that school . That even the athletes enjoy going to a school where they know that they are going to be in debt .A good example of one of these colleges is baylor. For example. baylor has an acceptance rate of 44 percent and is a very expensive college. Many people can't afford the tuition unless they get a full ride scholarship, or if they are just rich. Another example would be TCU whose percentage of acceptance is 43 percent . Why are they so expensive compared to the other universities and colleges? The best and most expensive college compared to the rest is harvard with an acceptance of only 5.4 percent meaning there is almost no chance to getting you getting accepted into that college which is really sad for the people whose dream university is that one . Then people question why are they so different from the other places. Expenses colleges are famous for their football and sport stuff and their educating is nothing different than the other schools. They ask is the education

quality really that different or is it just expensive because of the name . Is paying so much for education really worth it? Just think about it this way lets say you want to go to harvard but you didn't have the

In New York Times there is an article called “Is college tuition really too high “ . The article talks about how the college bills are too expensive for many students, especially for the middle class people. The article explains that median families are starting to choose to go to afford colleges,such as community colleges. The article is well based on information and statistics . The article states that “An estimated 21 million students attend at least some classes in a postsecondary institution.” This article shows that students are now not completing their education and are only partially completing it. Why is this ? Universities/colleges are getting further and further away from the middle classes reach. And many students who are capable of going to nice,expensive colleges can't go because the fee is way out of their reach.they are many articles who try to encourage students on way on how to find their college life and also what students go through like in the article “college students”This article talks about a researcher who went to investigate ten schools and ended up finding out that the majority of student could barely afford colleges .one of the student said that their schedule is really because he can't miss a day at work because he will lose money and that means he won't be able to afford his college.the article is well stated because it has proves over everything .it's over facts and peoples point of view of everything for example the professional looked

Fafsa is one of the method that student seek to get into colleges and how they get scholarships. Fafsa is a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a form that can be prepared annually by current and prospective college students (undergraduate and graduate)

in the United States to determine their eligibility for student financial aid. Fafsa is available for students all over United States and has helped many students with their education. Students see Fafsa as a way they can afford to go to their dream education school. There is an article called "how to afford college now" the article shows that throughout the years colleges have been getting more expensive to the point where not even middle class have been able to afford it. So imagine for the people who are below the middle class. The article says "Tuition, room and board, fees, and the occasional pizza add up to more than \$50,000 a year at the pricier schools, and average more than \$37,000 a year at private colleges and \$14,000 at public universities." (Stern, Linda. "How to Afford College Now.") It is too much money for a public school, especially for the middle class people

There is also TAFSA which is also another way students seek a way to find a way to attend college. TAFSA (Texas Application for State Financial Aid) This page is for non-citizens who are classified as Texas residents. If you are a foreign student or non-citizen, you may be eligible to be classified as a Texas resident for tuition purposes. It's basically another way that students seek to enter to college for free. This is for students who don't have papers information. There are also scholarships for those students who are involved in sports or outside school activities. Scholarships can help you go to school for free but if you go to a affordable you have it all free but if you choose the expensive one those scholarships might help you but you will still have to pay. It all depends on that student

There are many colleges who have same education as other schools and are so much more expensive. Such as Harvard. According to Harvard University is a private Ivy League research university in Cambridge, Massachusetts, established in 1636, whose history, influence, and wealth have made it one of the world's most prestigious universities (Harvard.edu)

It's around it's 40,000 dollars which is a lot of money for a school who have the same education as other schools and their price are a huge gap difference .thousands of dollars difference .but there are always different types of students such as the type of students who are into sports .they go to their dream schools because they want to play that sport and become pro from there. A lot of university become unique because they have athletes students and physical activities such as their sports. University of Florida. Gainesville, FL. Is a university who is famous because if it's sports .The Gators have won three national championships and eight SEC titles in the 108-season history of Florida's varsity football program.(gators.org). The school cost thousand of thousand of dollars and its but student choose to go there because of its sports and that just makes the student go in dept. specifically to those who couldn't even afford it at the first place or that don't know what they are choosing for their career .for example there could so many students who actually have no clue what they are studying for and have no idea the more time they are wasting the more money they are wasting too .also of their career actually don't work out they will waste all their time ,their money , and finally they will be in debt. Usually this are type of students who went to that dchk because of their sport but didn't make it pro and now it's too late for them .apparently Now You don't get put in jail anymore because of having school debt but you still have many consequences such as have to make a lot of community hours and just the fact of thinking you're in debt .it can make someone depressed. And that's the last thing you want (having to hate yourself because of a simple mistake )

## **DEBT**

Students in debt have a hard life . They will be in debt. and so maybe their friends . It's like their eyes are stabled and can't think right . They don't realize that once they are 21 they would be in a big world and they will feel bigger but they can't do anything because they will be in dept

.You've probably heard the statistics: such as saying that Americans owe around over \$1.4 trillion in student loan debt, spread out among about 44 million borrowers. That's about \$620 billion more than the total U.S. credit card debt. In fact, the average Class of 2016 graduate has \$37,172 in student loan debt, up six percent from last year. Those are really big numbers. And why do students have it? It's not worth it. They really don't need to go to college in order to become famous but that's actually a risky way of thinking and that can also ruin their future. Especially if you are not capable of going to that school. Why would you go to a place where you can't afford and won't be the same prestige and the fact that you can do the same thing in another university such as Richland, Mountain View, etc. Any community college who have education.

According to Mark Kantrowitz, publisher of FinAid.org, student loan debt is growing by \$3,000 per second. According to a report by The Institute for College Access and Success the average debt from those who graduated in 2013 topped \$30,000 in six states and was only below \$20,000 in one state (Mark Kantrowitz) also The total outstanding student loan debt in the U.S. is \$1.2 trillion, that's the second-highest level of consumer debt behind only mortgages. Most of that is loans held by the federal government. About 40 million Americans hold student loans and about 70% of bachelor's degree recipients graduate with debt. He keeps re stating that In 2012, 71 percent of students graduating from four-year colleges had student loan debt: Represents 1.3 million students graduating with debt, increase from 1.1 million in 2008. 66 percent of graduates from public colleges had loans (average debt of \$25,550). According to the US Census report, there are about 16 million students enrolled in colleges across the United States (US). And, together with Pre-K through 12th grade, there are a total of 74.6 million students in the US. However, if you need to go through on details then you would to ask the students instead. He was participating for president

Imagine you having a kid and then he decides he wants to go to a college or university that it's way out of your budget . He will have to realize that he has to go to a affordable one . The cost of college education today is so high that many young people are giving up their dream of going to college, while many others are graduating deeply in debt.( Bernie sanders ) famous person who was running for president and believe the new generation has new ideas and was suggesting to make college affordable .he was running for president but he wasn't able to win due that he lost versus the republican nomination Donald trump . Also . The privatization plan weakens Social Financial aid for college often includes a “mixed salad” of sources, such as savings from 529 plans, grants, loans, and scholarships. College isn't cheap and funding options can be complicated, so students will need to spend time researching all of the different cost-saving possibilities. Not sure where to start? Look first to financial aid options that don't have to be paid back, like grants and scholarships.Security and threatens our economic security by creating trillions of dollars in new debt- (Ruben hinojosa) he believes that due to all this millions of dollars that are just getting stacked up in dept by student who are not able to afford college basically their education it's weakening their education system and students are not going to schools anymore because they are in debt And can't be able to pay it back.as a student I see what the problem is . Imagine just finishing your career just for what .pay debt ? Today's generation that believe that going to the most expensive university is the best choice they can make but they are not thinking how their future is going to be after they are done. Students believe that always choosing the most famous schools are the best choices where they want to attend .In January 2015, President Obama proposed an initiative called America's College Promise that would wave tuition costs for students attending community college. But as of October, the initiative is still being discussed by a congressional committee — and has a long way to go before it's even up for a vote.

Still, community college could be the way to go. Students who aren't 100 percent sure of their career goals may want to explore different subjects by taking classes at a cheaper price. And those who do have clear goals in mind may also find it cost effective to take general education classes or prerequisites at a community college. Josh Wyner, Vice President of the College Excellence Program at the Aspen Institute says, "It's less expensive to start in this way. For many people it feels more egalitarian; it's a much broader range of people." But if you plan to transfer later to a four-year college, you'll want to make sure the class credits you take at your community college are transferrable. you just need to find your way into the college life . There are so many students who's dreams get shattered because they are not able to go to their college dream .know why ? Because it's just way much expensive than what they can afford . And trust me not going to college is a bad choice . there is a article called "strategies when you are saddlet student debt" The aricle talks about how More people have more student loan debt than at any time in history.it said that In fact,

average student loan debt in the U.S. has tripled since the mid-1990s. That's a much talked about problem. And as part of our money and life coverage, we're taking a look at how to tackle that debt when you're just starting out after college.this article is full based on facts so it will be good for my topic due that it states the percentage pf student s in dept due to their colleges expenses

They are also making a free proposal to some schools " "Free college proposal a threat to private colleges, diversity, some say."This article talks about how The report is bad news for Hillary Clinton's college proposal," said Neal McCluskey, director of the Center for Educational Freedom at the Cato Institute, a conservative think tank, and one of several scholars or organization heads to assail the plan in light of the new analysis.

"It would likely kill many private colleges that can't compete against 'free,' while increasing

what's going on with hillary about her colleges policy.

They might they are some people who made it famous by dropping out such as morgan freeman Respected actor has appeared in such films as 'Driving Miss Daisy,' 'Glory,' 'The Shawshank Redemption,' and 'The Dark Knight Trilogy he is one of the most famous actor know today and the fact that he was known to late and his age of 50 still he had luck. The fact that he is so known to earth and he didn't have to go to a expensive place make him so famous . There are so many famous actors who didn't have to be in the top of the top to become famous .another famous person who didn't have a good education was, Karp dropped out of an elite Bronx High School of Science and developed Tumblr, the blog-hosting and social network company, in 2007 in the "back bedroom of his mother's modest Manhattan apartment." He sold the blog-hosting company to Yahoo for \$1.1 billion in 2013, when his net worth reportedly exceeded \$200 million, and he remains as the company's CEO. Another famous person who dropped out and became famous was Lewis dropped out of high school at 15 to run his father's catering business, Tavistock Banqueting, and is currently worth about \$5.3 billion, according to Forbes.The businessman - who works from his yacht most of the year - owns a planned community in Lake Nona, near Orlando, which is now one of the fastest-growing developments in America and houses a medical city that includes the University of Central Florida College of Medicine and Health Sciences Campus, Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute, the Orlando VA Medical Center, and a University of Florida Research and Academic Center.

As the main investor in Tavistock Group, Lewis owns more than 200 companies, according to

Forbes, including London Premiership soccer team Tottenham Hotspur (Spurs), a stake in UK's largest pub operator, Mitchell's & Butlers plc, and approximately 135 restaurants and various resorts throughout the world.

He also has a covetable art collection that includes works by Picasso, Matisse, Lucian Freud, and Francis Bacon. also one of the best rappers in this decade Apparently, money isn't everything. Rap superstar Drake may rank No. 6 on "Forbes"'s Hip-Hop Cash Kings list, earning \$20.5 million from May 2011 to May 2012, but he had some equally important unfinished business to settle — completing his high school education. The "Best I Ever Had" rapper, who dropped out of Canada's prestigious Vaughan Road Academy at the age of 15 to co-star on the Canadian TV show "Degrassi: The Next Generation," has spent the last five months finishing his studies and is now a graduate. yeah he might have comeback to school but he became famous before even ending his education .he is a good example about his education. he was wrong for dropping out but

Of course that some people became famous because of they were the fortunate people but is it really a worth having that risk . No everyone becomes successful from dropping out and a lot of people are not successful in their life .earning 7.25 dollars an hour around 245 a week basically 800 a moron that's not enough for rent .don't forget you have to pay the bills , and food . It's not worth taking that risk just because you don't want to attend school .

### **Quotes n**

Like what is the benefit of even attending a expensive college for example Wong said “The most amazing thing about Harvard is the people. It’s cliché but it’s true. Here you will find people who will challenge, inspire, and surprise you”,(Wong ) is it actually even worth spending

so much money for an experience that you can at any school . Just imagine what you could of done with that money instead. Could have gotten yourself a new car or started with your life already.you are going to spend that much just to get the experience of your life .not worth it .not worth it At all . Also a Anonymous :”First of all, Harvard is one of the most, if not the most, distinguished universities in the world. People from all over the world with all sorts of talents attend Harvard University which really is an culture-enriching experience. Lastly, following your life after college, students from Harvard University have so many connections with employers because of Harvard's largest alumni base “ basically he just said the same thing as what Wong said .they are going to education and be in dept for the rest of their just because they wanted to meet new people and have some experience . “I couldn't help but to think back to my classmates at Thomas Jefferson High School in San Antonio. They had the same talent, the same brains, the same dreams as the folks we sat with at Stanford and Harvard. I realized the difference wasn't one of intelligence or drive. The difference was opportunity”.(julian Castro). The student says that their smartness werent that different except their opportunities and how they used it . You have never seen a student talking about that you should go to Harvard because their education is so much different then other school . Maybe there a little different but not as much to be in debt for years .

### **Successful**

Sarah Palin. Sarah Palin, former Republican vice presidential candidate and former governor of Alaska, actually attended five different schools during her academic years, including two community colleges. She is a great example of successful people who didn't need to attend to any expensive college or university.she did everything on her own and without having no debt she is now successfully and a great example for people out there who still believe that going to Harvard and be on debt is better than going a community college .she didn't have the money but she manage to be successful.she is still alive and lives a perfect life.

## Conclusion

Students shouldn't stress out of going to a community college and think just because its community you won't get far. According to the sources going to a expensive college doesn't actually give you the future you thought you would get .it might give you the experience but you spend so much money on a college when you could have saved so much money going to affordable one and have the same education.

hopefully this source can help students realize that it doesn't matter you can be successful either way . You don't have to follow no one path just follow your own and make sure to go somewhere and focus on your career. I'm not saying to not follow your dreams and go to the most expensive college or your college dream but more like an advice.

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# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2017 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Academic Paper

### Sample: I

- 1 Understand and Analyze Context Score: 2**
- 2 Understand and Analyze Argument Score: 2**
- 3 Evaluate Sources and Evidence Score: 2**
- 4 Research Design Score: 0**
- 5 Establish Argument Score: 3**
- 6 Select and Use Evidence Score: 2**
- 7 Engage Audience Score: 1**
- 8 Apply Conventions Score: 2**
- 9 Apply Conventions Score: 1**

### LOW SAMPLE RESPONSE

"Millions of students don't know what to do after high school..."

#### **Content Area: Understand and Analyze Context — Row 1**

The response earned 2 points for this row because the paper identifies a topic of inquiry. See page 1, paragraph 1: "Millions of students don't know what to do after high school because their dream college/university is way too expensive and can't afford it". The response did not earn 4 points because this topic is insufficiently focused to generate a sophisticated argument.

#### **Content Area: Understand and Analyze Argument — Row 2**

The response earned 2 points for this row because the paper presents a single perspective within its literature review (see page 1, paragraph 2 where this perspective is characterized as "Many colleges or universities are way too expensive for the average person to afford"). The response did not earn 4 points because all sources subsequently cited are used to support that opinion and do not represent a robust survey of literature in the field.

#### **Content Area: Evaluate Sources and Evidence — Row 3**

The response earned 2 points for this row because the paper includes at least three scholarly sources within its literature review (Commonweal, The Chronicle of Higher Education, National Journal). The response did not earn 4 points because the survey of literature is haphazard, making it difficult for the reader to determine its specific purpose in relation to the student's inquiry.

#### **Content Area: Research Design — Row 4**

The response earned 0 points for this row because the paper does not explicitly provide any research method used for the inquiry. The response did not earn 3 points because the paper makes no attempt to even summarize the steps the student took to find information. The only mention of the word "method" is on page 4, bottom of the page, where it is used to refer to FAFSA, which is actually a financial aid form.

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## Academic Paper

### **Content Area: Establish Argument — Row 5**

The response earned 3 points for this row because the paper mounts an argument that minimally links evidence to claims (see page 12, paragraph 1, where the paper offers its conclusion that "According to the sources going to a expensive college doesn't actually give you the future you thought you would get .it might give you the experience but you spend so much money on a college when you could have saved so much money going to affordable one and have the same education"). The response did not earn 5 points because the paper does not link evidence to claims in a complex manner in order to develop a new understanding about the topic. The paper is ultimately a polemic and not a formal research paper as outlined in the task description.

### **Content Area: Select and Use Evidence — Row 6**

The response earned 2 points for this row because there is an attempt to use evidence to support claims (see page 6, paragraph 2, which begins "According to Mark Kantrowitz, publisher of FinAid.org, student loan debt is growing by \$3,000 per second"). The response did not earn 4 points because the paper makes no clear distinction between the new body of evidence in the paper and the information used as a literature review, as indeed the entire paper is entitled "Literature Review". Thus, the paper does not demonstrate sufficient evidence that the student's own inquiry is building on what is already known.

### **Content Area: Engage Audience — Row 7**

The response earned 1 point for this row because there is an attempt at structuring the paper (see headings: "Literature Review", "Quotes", and "Conclusion"), but the lack of clear distinction of other "Required Elements" within the paper distracts the reader. The response did not earn 2 points because the paper wanders extensively throughout the discussion of the topic and does not clearly guide the reader as it progresses through its commentary.

### **Content Area: Apply Conventions — Row 8**

The response earned 2 points for this row because the paper does include attempts at citation and attribution of evidence (see for example page 3, paragraph 2: "'Is college tuition really too high'", a New York Times article that is cited in the paper's bibliography). The response did not earn 4 points because citation is erratic and mostly incorrect with numerous sources cited in the text, but not in the bibliography, and vice versa. In addition, the bibliography is incorrectly formatted, itemized in apparently random order, and at least one name missing from a source (" , John").

### **Content Area: Apply Conventions — Row 9**

The response earned 1 point for this row because the paper is written very poorly, to the point that grammatical errors severely impede communication (see for example, page 5, bottom: "It's like their eyes are stabled and can't think right" and page 8, towards bottom: "this article is full based on facts so it will be good for my topic due that it states the percentage pf student in dept due to their colleges expenses"). The response did not earn 2 points because the language of the paper is not strong, and demonstrates consistently sloppy and ungrammatical writing.