

AP[®] SEMINAR
2015 SCORING GUIDELINES

AP SEMINAR PERFORMANCE TASK RUBRIC: INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH-BASED ESSAY & PRESENTATION
COMPONENT 1 OF 3: INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN ARGUMENT

CONTENT AREA	PERFORMANCE LEVELS		
1 Understanding and Analyzing Context	The essay identifies a research question that is trivial, overly broad in scope, or poorly connected to the context of the source materials. 2	The essay identifies a research question of reasonable scope; however, the question is not sustained or is not controlling the argument throughout the essay; or, it might be only tangentially related to the context of the source materials. 4	The essay identifies a complex research question that is clearly articulated within the context of the source materials. The question is sustained and controls the argument throughout the essay. 6
2 Understanding and Analyzing Perspective	The essay omits or inaccurately represents multiple perspectives and conclusions. It omits or misstates objections, implications, or limitations of one or more perspectives. 2	The essay identifies multiple perspectives and conclusions. It identifies some objections, implications, or limitations of these perspectives. 4	The essay evaluates multiple perspectives and conclusions. It explains objections, implications, and/or limitations of these perspectives. 6
3 Selecting and Using Evidence	The argument incorporates evidence from a minimal range of sources or ineffectively or inaccurately incorporates evidence. 2	The argument uses some combination of evidence, but from a narrow range of sources; or, a wide range of evidence is present but might not be accurately interpreted or synthesized. 4	The argument accurately and thoroughly interprets and synthesizes evidence from a wide range of sources. 6
4 Analyzing and Evaluating Evidence	The essay makes few distinctions among various pieces of evidence, treating all evidence as relevant (or irrelevant), credible (or incredible). 2	The essay distinguishes among various pieces of evidence in terms of their relevance and/or credibility. 4	The essay explicitly distinguishes well among various pieces of evidence in terms of their relevance and credibility. 6
5 Building and Communicating an Argument	The argument is disorganized and poorly reasoned or overly general. The argument presents few or no specific resolutions, conclusions, and/or solutions. 2	The argument is logically organized, but the reasoning may be faulty, or it may be misaligned with the research question. The argument presents specific resolutions, conclusions, and/or solutions that are impractical or do not derive from the line of reasoning. 4	The argument is logically organized, well-reasoned, and complex. The argument presents resolutions, conclusions, and/or solutions that are unambiguously linked to evidence and fully address the research question. 6
6 Building and Communicating an Argument	The essay omits commentary about connections between claims and evidence or offers only very general commentary. 2	The essay uses minimal commentary to link claims and evidence. 4	The essay clearly and convincingly uses commentary to link claims and evidence. 6

AP[®] SEMINAR 2015 SCORING GUIDELINES

7 Selecting and Using Evidence	The response includes many errors in attribution and citation. The bibliography, if included, is inconsistent in style and format and/or incomplete in citation elements. 1	The response attributes and cites sources used with a reasonable amount of accuracy and thoroughness. The bibliography includes nearly all referenced sources, most of which are consistent and complete in citation elements. 2	The response appears to accurately attribute and cite the sources used. The bibliography includes all referenced sources, and is consistent and complete in citation elements. 3
8 Grammar and Style	The report contains many flaws in grammar and style that interfere with communication to the reader. 1	The report contains some flaws in grammar or style that minimally interfere with communication to the reader. 2	The report contains few flaws in grammar or style and clearly communicates to the reader. 3

ADDITIONAL SCORES: In addition to the scores represented on the rubrics, readers can also assign scores of **0** (zero) and **NR** (No Response).

0 (Zero)

- A score of **0** is assigned to a single row of the rubric when the response displays a below-minimum level of quality as identified in that row of the rubric.
- Scores of **0** are assigned to all rows of the rubric when the response is off-topic; a repetition of a prompt; entirely crossed-out; a drawing or other markings; or a response in a language other than English.

NR (No Response)

A score of **NR** is assigned to responses that are blank.

What are the Ethical, Educational, and Cultural Implications of Monetary Incentives on Child Development?

In Chicago Heights, Illinois, third and fourth graders play a version of something known as the N-back game. The game can be difficult and frustrating at times, so understandably the students sometimes lose focus. To prevent this, the teachers, in partnership with the University of Chicago's Initiative on Chicago Price Theory, attempt to increase motivation by offering students a variety of incentives: a \$10 prepaid visa card, inexpensive prizes, or direct competition with peers. An observer notes that some students seem more motivated than others; one in particular looks incredibly bored.¹ Could his behavior be attributed to the inefficacy of the incentives provided?

Incentives are something that all humans are familiar with. Everyone has been faced with an incentive scheme before, be it candy promised for becoming potty trained or the lure of a well-paying job for succeeding in school. An incentive is "simply a means of urging people to do more of a good thing and less of a bad thing."² There are several categories of incentives, and economic incentives, the focus of this study, most often take the form of monetary rewards or penalties.

Incentives of any kind can have a great effect, but whether or not the achieved effect matches the intended effect is another story. When considered in the context of child development, monetary incentives can have unwanted consequences. Research has shown increased materialism and diminished altruistic tendencies for children with exposure to

¹ Dan Hurley, "Can You Make Yourself Smarter?" *New York Times Magazine*, April 18, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/22/magazine/can-you-make-yourself-smarter.html?_r=1

² Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009), 15-18

monetary incentives. Furthermore, monetary incentives can contribute to the loss of intrinsic motivation to learn and to a reduction in creativity. At the same time, however, they can foster a healthy competitive atmosphere, and one cannot disregard their efficacy. Undoubtedly, monetary incentives will continue to be useful for motivating children, both at home and in school. In light of this, it is important to determine the ethical, educational, and cultural implications of monetary incentivizing on child development, in order to be able to determine the situations in which they are best applied.

Context: Psychology of Incentives

Humans learn naturally by associating sequential events. This learning process is called conditioning, and is subdivided into classical and operant conditioning. In operant conditioning, a human or other organism learns to associate behaviors and their consequences, and thus learns "to repeat acts followed by good results and avoid acts followed by bad results."³ This psychological process is the reasons why incentives work. When followed by a reinforcer, which an incentive provides, a behavior is strengthened and much more likely to be repeated in the future. This fact is known as the law of effect, articulated in 1911 by professor of educational psychology at Columbia University, Edward Thorndike (1874-1949). The law states that behaviors followed by satisfying results are much more likely to develop into a behavioral pattern and to reoccur.⁴

One of the most important steps in the development of a child's brain is "the ability to suppress inappropriate thoughts and actions in favor of goal-directed ones, especially in the

³ David G. Myers, *Psychology: Eighth Edition in Modules* (New York: Worth Publishers, 2007): 310

⁴ Maria Konnikova, "In Praise of Better Praise," *The New Yorker*, January 16, 2014, <http://www.newyorker.com/business/currency/in-praise-of-better-praise>.

presence of compelling incentives."⁵ This capability develops as the child grows into adolescence; as a child ages, he or she becomes more susceptible to incentives and begins to learn through the process of operant conditioning. The teenage years especially are "characterized by increased reward seeking behavior,"⁶ suggesting that incentive schemes might be particularly effective for children and adolescents.

Finally, it is important to note that when rewards are unnecessary, they can do more harm than good. This is especially clear in cases where an incentive, an extrinsic motivator, is given for performance of a task that did not require one in the first place, as its performers have some sort of intrinsic motivation.⁷ A 1999 128 study meta-analysis conducted by Edward L. Deci, Richard M. Ryan, both from the Department of Clinical and Social Sciences in Psychology at the University of Rochester, and Richard Koestner, Department of Psychology at McGill University, found that all rewards, including tangible and expected, "significantly undermined free-choice intrinsic motivation."⁸ By analyzing and comparing the results of 128 studies which evaluated the effect of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation, the researchers concluded that rewards were more detrimental than beneficial, in that they reduced innate enthusiasm. The finding was consistent across all age groups, from children to adults. This is known as the over-justification

⁵ B.J. Casey, Sarah Getz, and Adriana Galvan, "The Adolescent Brain," *Developmental Review* 28, no.1 (2008): 62–77, doi:10.1016/j.dr.2007.08.003

⁶ Adriana Galvan, "Adolescent Development of the Reward System," *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* 4, no. 6 (Feb 2010): 115, doi: 10.3389/neuro.09.006.2010

⁷ David G. Myers, *Psychology: Eighth Edition in Modules*: 332

⁸ Edward L. Deci, Richard Koestner, and Richard M. Ryan, "A Meta-Analytic Review of Experiments Examining the Effects of Extrinsic Rewards on Intrinsic Motivation," *Psychological Bulletin* 125, no. 6 (1999): 627

effect. If an external motivator is excessive, associations can form which link the activity to the external motivator and thus undermine intrinsic interest.

Ethical Implications of Monetary Incentives

Monetary incentives can have major detrimental effects on a child's character. A 2015 study published by the peer reviewed *Journal of Consumer Research*⁹ found that "warm and supportive parents provide children with material rewards that in the long run foster materialism in adulthood."¹⁰ Many parents engage in what is called material parenting, the use of material rewards and punishments, which include (though are not limited to) money. This is entirely logical: parents who have positive relationships with their children enjoy giving their children gifts which make them happy. Unfortunately, this style of parenting can lead to materialism in adulthood. Conditional material rewards, which are dependent on good behavior, link an achievement or behavior with the reward. Children given these rewards "associate acquisition and ownership of desirable goods with accomplishment or success,"¹¹ and this association is one of the characteristics of materialism. Unconditional material rewards, which are given independently of a certain behavior or achievement, can also foster materialism, as children become used to receiving material rewards. As a result, these children place increasing importance on acquisition, another characteristic of materialism.

⁹ *Journal of Consumer Research*, "The University of Chicago Press Journals", accessed April 11, 2015, <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/journals/journal/jcr.html>

¹⁰ Marsha L. Richins and Lan Nguyen Chaplin, "Material Parenting: How the Use of Goods in Parenting Fosters Materialism in the Next Generation," *Journal of Consumer Research* 41, no. 6 (April 2015): 1333-1357, DOI: 10.1086/680087

¹¹ Ibid

The authors of the study, Marsha L. Richins, the Myron Watkins Distinguished Professor in the Marketing Department at the University of Missouri, and Lan Nguyen Chaplin of the University of Illinois at Chicago, noted that this heightened sense of materialism can have a resonating effect throughout adulthood. Materialism has been linked with compulsive purchasing, gambling, higher debt, and recurring financial problems. Even something that appears only tangentially related is affected: materialistic people report lower satisfaction in their marriages.¹² While parents, in providing their children with money or toys or other rewards, are only being loving, there can be serious repercussions. No parent wishes to see their child in financial or marital struggles, and perhaps these could be to some degree prevented by reducing the amount of material rewards given to a child.

In addition to fostering materialism, the use of monetary incentives to promote certain moral behaviors often backfires. A 2002 study by Ernst Fehr of the University of Zurich and Armin Falk, University of Bonn, demonstrated that "monetary incentives targeted at promoting moral behavior may achieve the opposite and, in fact, undermine moral behavior."¹³ This point was further established by a 2008 study published in the *American Psychology Association* journal. The study, led by Felix Warneken and Michael Tomasello of the Department of Developmental and Comparative Psychology at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, sought to investigate how rewards influenced the helping behavior of young children. It found that providing infants with a material reward resulted in less engagement in further helping behavior. This was especially true when compared to infants who received some

¹² Marsha L. Richins and Lan Nguyen Chaplin, "Material Parenting: How the Use of Goods in Parenting Fosters Materialism in the Next Generation."

¹³ Claudio Feser, "The Limits of Monetary Incentives," *Chief Executive Magazine*, February 3, 2012, accessed April 3, 2015, <http://chiefexecutive.net/the-limits-of-monetary-incentives>

form of social praise or even no reward at all. The researchers concluded that this occurrence was attributable to the over-justification effect, and that providing an external reward for a behavior the infants already found to be intrinsically rewarding was detrimental to altruistic tendencies.¹⁴ In light of this evidence, parents and educators must realize that children have an innate selflessness and a desire to help others. Providing a reward for such behavior is simply destructive, as it discourages it in the long run, evidently counter to what the reward was intending to achieve.

The implications of monetary incentives in ethical terms are clear: they foster materialism and when used to promote selfless behavior, they undermine it.

Educational Implications of Monetary Incentives

In the realm of education, the use of monetary incentives is not new. The discovery that "monetary prizes...stimulate spelling efficiency" for grade school students was reported in the *New York Times* as early as 1937.¹⁵ Educators were realizing that monetary rewards for students spurred them to achieve.

Monetary incentives can often be especially effective. A group of researchers from the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the University of Aachen, Germany, ran an experiment in order to determine whether monetary and non-monetary (social) rewards could enhance the cognitive control process of response inhibition. After testing each participant for their baseline, the researchers Kohls, Peltzer, Herperzt-Dahlmann, and Konrad

¹⁴ Felix Warneken and Michael Tomasello, "Extrinsic Rewards Undermine Altruistic Tendencies in 20-month-olds," *Developmental Psychology* 44, no. 6 (Nov 2008): 1785-1788. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0013860>

¹⁵ Benjamin Fine, "Monetary Prizes Spur Grade Pupils; Survey in City Finds That Rewards Stimulate Spelling Efficiency," *New York Times*, July 11, 1937.

had them take the test again, this time receiving either a monetary reward, a social reward, a combination of rewards, or no reward at all. They found that while all rewards improved performance, "larger effects were observed for monetary reward."¹⁶ The data indicated that financial incentives have a much stronger reinforcing value than social incentives do, suggesting that the efficacy of monetary rewards is great.¹⁷

While these results seem to depict a fairly clear image, the study failed to assess the long term effect that the use of monetary rewards had. During the time that the researchers were conducting their experiment, it is true that financial rewards were exceptionally effective compared to other types of rewards. However, the goals of most incentive schemes for children is to foster and encourage positive habits; these goals are long term. In the classroom, teachers use incentives to increase motivation to learn. This is not a short term goal, but rather is intended to be effective for the remainder of a child's academic career, long after the incentive is removed. Because the researchers did not evaluate the effect of a financial incentive in the long term, these results must be disregarded until corroborated by a study that includes an evaluation of long term effects.

When the long term effects are assessed, it becomes clear that monetary incentives are damaging. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) writes that "a child is more likely to learn and retain information when he is intrinsically motivated."¹⁸ As teachers seek to

¹⁶ G. Kohls, J. Peltzer, B. Herperzt- Dahlmann, and K. Konrad, "Differential Effects of Social and Non-social Reward on Response Inhibition in Children and Adolescents," *Developmental Science* 12, no. 4 (July 2009): 614-25, doi: 10.1111/j.1467-7687.2009.00816.x.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Motivating Learning in Young Children," *National Association of School Psychologists*, 2013, accessed April 7, 2015, http://www.nasponline.org/resources/home_school/earlychildmotiv_ho.aspx

enhance a child's motivation, NASP emphasizes the importance of "the development of motivation so that there is a proper foundation for optimal educational growth."¹⁹ In other words, when teachers try to motivate children, innate motivation must be preserved, as children learn best when motivated intrinsically. NASP cautions teachers about the use of extrinsic rewards, writing that it is "difficult for a child to sustain extrinsically motivated activity," meaning that after a reward is offered, children will become less interested and less motivated.²⁰ When considering the long term results of monetary rewards, NASP concluded that they "severely interfere with the child's motivational development."²¹

A study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* found similar results. The study tested the effect of monetary rewards on preschoolers. As expected, the children who had received money for completion of a target activity were less motivated to perform that same activity in a later free play period.²² The results of this study, which focused on the long term repercussions of monetary incentives on children, suggest that even though the monetary reward may have enhanced motivation for the brief period of time during which it was offered, motivation was, in the end, reduced dramatically. In the long term, it seems, monetary rewards backfire.

Another concern about the use of monetary incentives in schools is that it leads to a reduction in creativity. "Social Influences on Creativity: The Effects of Contracted-for Reward,"

¹⁹ "Motivating Learning in Young Children," *National Association of School Psychologists*

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ibid

²² Rosemarie Anderson, Sam T. Manoogian, and J. Steven Reznick, "The Undermining and Enhancing of Intrinsic Motivation in Preschool Children," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 34, no 5. (Nov 1976): 915-922. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.34.5.915>

a set of three studies published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, tested whether or not completing a creative task with the knowledge of an imminent reward would have negative impacts on creativity. Children and adolescents ranging from 5-11 years of age to undergraduates were given the task of story-telling or collage-making. Some were offered a monetary reward for their work, while the others were not. When the work of those who knew they were going to receive payment was evaluated, it was indeed found to be less creative. What these findings, replicated in each of the three studies, suggest is that the offer of money as a reward lessens ingenuity.²³

Even though monetary incentives are effective in the achievement of short term goals, they fail in the long term through their reduction of intrinsic motivation. To put it simply, they backfire. Monetary rewards have pernicious effects on creativity as well, and so it appears that monetary rewards impact children negatively in education.

Cultural Implications of Monetary Incentives

In a more broad cultural sense, incentivizing through the use of monetary rewards can increase competition. One of the most outspoken critics of competition is author Alfie Kohn, who argues that "competition is destructive, particularly... for children."²⁴ Kohn believes that "the absence of competition seems to be a prerequisite for excellence in most endeavors,"²⁵ and that

²³ Teresa M. Amabile, Beth A. Hennessey, and Barbara S. Grossman, "Social Influences on Creativity: The Effects of Contracted-for Reward," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 50, no 1 (Jan 1986): 14-23. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.50.1.14>

²⁴ Matt Richtel, "The Competing Views on Competition," *New York Times*, October 8, 2012, accessed April 12, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/11/garden/the-role-of-competitiveness-in-raising-healthy-children.html>.

²⁵ Ibid

competition is detrimental to self-esteem, decreases productivity, and fosters hostility.²⁶ Although Kohn's assertions are not without merit, there is more evidence suggesting that competition is healthy and positive, especially when linked with cooperation.

John Tauer, professor of psychology at the University of St. Thomas, led a series of studies assessing the performance of 9 to 14 year olds shooting free throws in three different situations. The first situation was direct competition, one player competing with another for the most baskets; the second was cooperation, working together with another player for the most baskets; and the third was a combination of direct competition and cooperation, pitting teams of two players against each other. Dr. Tauer found that "the combination of cooperation and competition resulted in greater satisfaction and often in higher scores as well."²⁷ University of Minnesota professor emeritus of educational psychology, David Johnson, confirms Dr. Tauer's findings about the merits of cooperation: "The creativity, the innovation, the quality of product all goes up as you nurture talents and performance of others."²⁸ Rewards can be incredibly beneficial when used to foster cooperation.

Even though this study did not pertain directly to the use of monetary incentives, there is no doubt to its relevance. Children perform better when cooperating with a team of peers and directly competing with another team; cooperation and competition are powerful motivators. If linked with a monetary incentive, they could become even more effective. The cooperative and competitive aspects could do much to alleviate the impact of an external monetary motivator on

²⁶ Alfie Kohn, "The Case Against Competition," *Working Mother* (Sept 1987), <http://www.alfiekohn.org/article/case-competition/>

²⁷ Matt Richtel, "The Competing Views on Competition."

²⁸ Ibid

intrinsic motivation, due to the inherently enjoyable atmosphere friendly competition and cooperation foster.

Solution

Monetary incentives are very powerful, but their usefulness when dealing with children depends on the situation and the manner in which they are applied. In many cases, there are unintended consequences of incentives.

Parents should look to limit their use of monetary incentives when disciplining a child. As Marsha L. Richins and Lan Nguyen Chaplin found, the practice of material parenting, of giving children a monetary reward, can cause a child to grow up more materialistic. There are resounding implications of materialism in adulthood, ranging from the obvious financial troubles to the somewhat surprising marital dissatisfaction. Monetary incentives should also be avoided when attempting to foster altruistic behavior, as it was found to undermine it. Instead of rewarding children with money or other material goods, it would be better if parents used praise or rewarded children with an experience, such as going to the zoo, an amusement park or even something as simple as visiting an ice cream parlor. Not only would these alternatives escape from the harmful effects of monetary incentives, but they would also allow a parent to spend quality time with their child, improving the relationship. However, all types of rewards must be resorted to in moderation.

In the classroom, teachers must be very cautious to avoid the over-justification effect. Due to the danger of destroying intrinsic motivation through the offer of external monetary motivators, it would be best to abstain from the use of monetary incentives entirely. Education is one of the greatest privileges for a child, a way to overcome social barriers and to gain a sense of

confidence through the acquisition of knowledge. To deny a child better possibilities by reducing intrinsic motivation and thus reducing their interest and motivation in school runs counter to the goal of every teacher in the world. Children find the greatest success in school when intrinsically motivated, as the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) found, and for this reason anything that might reduce this motivation should be kept far away from the classroom. When the consideration that monetary incentives reduce creativity is added into the equation, it becomes even more clear that monetary incentives should not be used in schools.

Bibliography

- Alfie Kohn, "The Case Against Competition," *Working Mother* (Sept 1987), <http://www.alfiekohn.org/article/case-competition/>
- Amabile, Teresa M., Hennessey, Beth A., Grossman, Barbara S. "Social Influences on Creativity: The Effects of Contracted-for Reward." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 50, no 1 (Jan 1986): 14-23. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.50.1.14>
- Anderson, Rosemarie, Manoogian, Sam T. and Reznick, J. Steven. "The Undermining and Enhancing of Intrinsic Motivation in Preschool Children." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 34, no 5. (Nov 1976): 915-922. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.34.5.915>
- Casey, B.J., Getz, Sarah, and Galvan, Adriana. "The Adolescent Brain." *Developmental Review* 28, no.1 (2008): 62–77. doi:10.1016/j.dr.2007.08.003
- Deci, Edward L., Koestner, Richard, and Ryan, Richard M. "A Meta-Analytic Review of Experiments Examining the Effects of Extrinsic Rewards on Intrinsic Motivation." *Psychological Bulletin* 125, no. 6 (1999): 627-668
- Feser, Claudio. "The Limits of Monetary Incentives." *Chief Executive Magazine*, February 3, 2012, accessed April 3, 2015. <http://chiefexecutive.net/the-limits-of-monetary-incentives>.
- Fine, Benjamin. "Monetary Prizes Spur Grade Pupils; Survey in City Finds That Rewards Stimulate Spelling Efficiency." *New York Times*, July 11, 1937. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=9D06E1DF1E30EE32A25752C1A9619C946694D6CF>.
- Galvan, Adriana. "Adolescent Development of the Reward System." *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* 4, no. 6 (Feb 2010): 115-124. doi: 10.3389/neuro.09.006.2010
- Hurley, Dan. "Can You Make Yourself Smarter?" *New York Times Magazine*, April 18, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/22/magazine/can-you-make-yourself-smarter.html?_r=1
- "Journal of Consumer Research." *The University of Chicago Press Journals*. Accessed April 11, 2015. <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/journals/journal/jcr.html>.
- Kohls, G., Peltzer, J., Herperzt- Dahlmann, B., and Konrad, K. "Differential Effects of Social and Non-social Reward on Response Inhibition in Children and Adolescents." *Developmental Science* 12, no. 4 (July 2009): 614-25. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-7687.2009.00816.x.

Konnikova, Maria. "In Praise of Better Praise." *The New Yorker*, January 16, 2014. <http://www.newyorker.com/business/currency/in-praise-of-better-praise>.

Levitt, Steven D. and Dubner, Stephen J. *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009.

Myers, David G. *Psychology: Eighth Edition in Modules*. New York: Worth Publishers, 2007.

"Motivating Learning in Young Children." *National Association of School Psychologists*, 2013. Accessed April 7, 2015. http://www.nasponline.org/resources/home_school/earlychildmotiv_ho.aspx

Richins, Marsha L. and Chaplin, Lan Nguyen. "Material Parenting: How the Use of Goods in Parenting Fosters Materialism in the Next Generation." *Journal of Consumer Research* 41, no. 6 (April 2015): 1333-1357. DOI: 10.1086/680087

Richtel, Matt. "The Competing Views on Competition." *New York Times*. October 8, 2012. Accessed April 12, 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/11/garden/the-role-of-competitiveness-in-raising-healthy-children.html>.

Warneken, Felix and Tomasello, Michael. "Extrinsic Rewards Undermine Altruistic Tendencies in 20-month-olds." *Developmental Psychology* 44, no. 6 (Nov 2008): 1785-1788. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0013860>

Video Games and Education

As technology becomes more advanced, people find new ways to interact with it to enhance their lives and have new experiences. Video games epitomize modern day interactive technology, despite how relatively new they are. They offer a player the opportunity to enter a different world, one where the actions of the player and the game influence each other in every moment. Even though video games have permeated mainstream culture well enough to have a sizable following across all gaming platforms, stigmatization has prevented video games from proliferating their influence into other facets of society. The education system in the United States could reap significant benefits by effectively utilizing video games to reform the current structure of the system.

Since the Industrial Revolution, the basic paradigm of the education system in the United States has remained mostly unchanged. Schools still educate students using methods reminiscent of factory assembly lines, methods that do not attempt to or rarely attempt to incorporate new technology or techniques to improve education. Generally, the scope of technological reform of the education system has been limited to basic tools that are only useful for saving paper, like the Smart Board. Against the beliefs of many, video games can also be utilized to better educate students. However, the current model for the education system is too rigid and strict to accommodate such a versatile and unorthodox asset. As it stands, video games cannot be effectively incorporated into the education system to elicit any kind of meaningful change. Only by fundamentally changing the model of the education system can video games be used to their full potential to help students learn existing material and improve their minds as a whole. The

question I asked for my research was: What are the beneficial effects of video games, and how can the education system be restructured to effectively incorporate video games? This paper will examine the mental, social, and educational benefits of video games to determine the value they could hold in education, the shortcomings of and the problems with the current education system, and how video games could potentially be integrated into a new system to revolutionize education. I was inspired to pursue this topic by Document 6, in which John Locke argued that knowledge and understanding are formed through sensation and reflection; having an experience and thinking about that experience to understand it. Video games can provide a plethora of experiences to learn from, giving students the chance to reflect on what they experience in ways never before possible.

The potential benefits of integrating video games into the education system are not confined to academic learning. Cognitive researcher Daphne Bavelier found that playing action video games like *Call of Duty* can improve both eyesight and attention capabilities when played in sufficient doses (2012). Bavelier also pointed out that playing action games in brief, regular intervals over the course of a month can allow the positive effects the games have on vision and attention to persist for 5-10 months after a person stops playing (2012). While these benefits have obvious uses in the way of rehabilitation for those who have suffered brain trauma, they can also assist those with healthy brains with mundane tasks like driving and writing (Bavelier, 2012). Enhanced ability in such activities can profoundly impact the youth, who require these skills to learn and function efficiently in the world.

Different types of video games can induce a variety of effects on the brain. While action video games boost perception and attention, roleplaying and strategy games can help to improve

problem solving skills, according to researcher Lisa Bowen (2014). Various video game genres and types are useful to do different things, but Bowen noted that playing any type of video game regularly can increase a person's creativity (2014). The versatility of video games allows them to be used as highly effective teaching and skill building tools, as evinced by the plethora of positive effects they can create when played in a healthy fashion.

Video games can also improve players socially, especially when considering the popularity of multiplayer games and the introduction of online gaming. Researchers Isabela Granic, Adam Lobel, and Rutger C. M. E. Engels posited that people who engage in the social aspects of games are more likely to exhibit prosocial behaviors and actions in the real world (2014). As humans become more attached to and integrated with technology, interpersonal interaction becomes substantially compromised. Many video games strike a fine balance between interpersonal communication and technological interaction without actively pushing players to participate in the social aspects of a game. In regards to the relationship between real world social interaction and social interaction through video games, Granic, Lobel, and Engels (2014) concluded about the often denigrated genre of violent video games that,

...playing a violent video game cooperatively, compared with competitively, increases subsequent prosocial, cooperative behavior outside of the game context and can even overcome the effects of outgroup membership status, making players more cooperative with outgroup members than if they had played competitively. (p. 73)

This finding is encouraging because it shows the malleability of social conditions in many video games, which can allow for the positive manipulation of different aspects of a game to produce a

desired effect on players. Video games can be implemented in a variety of ways to socialize people to value cooperative behavior and thinking, which make games promising tools for teaching children.

The current education system is unable to support effective implementation of video games, despite the tested and potential benefits they possess. Sir Ken Robinson made a compelling argument about the state of the education system when he broke its paradigm down into a few fundamental problems: the current education system stifles creativity, it utilizes antiquated ideas in the modern day cultural and economic environment, and it only appeals to and works for a limited group of people (2006). Sir Robinson asserted that education systems around the world cater to a few types of people, and relegate those without proacademic qualities to the brand of “unintelligent” (2006). Fundamentally, the education system is intended to shut down creative impulses and churn out batches of identically minded students, according to Sir Robinson (2006). Such a system cannot acclimate itself well to the dynamic nature of video games. That is not to suggest that video games are the elixir that will cure all of the ails of the system, but rather that video games can help to transition education into a new era and address some of the problems of the current system.

The inherent problems in the education system and the numerous benefits video games have beg the question of how video games can be appropriately implemented into a new system to help transition the world into a new era of information and idea exchange. Incorporating video games into the education system can provide noticeable improvements in learning. At Stanford University, professors have already started using video games to teach lessons in statistics. Professor Daniel Schwartz and Dr. Dylan Arena performed a study in which they modified the

classic arcade game *Space Invaders* to invisibly incorporate statistical concepts like probability distribution to introduce students to statistics while using fewer texts (2014). The results of the study concluded that students who played the altered version of *Space Invaders* and read an accompanying text that explained the statistical ideas present in the game marginally improved their performance in the course when compared to students who only partook in one of the two activities (2014). “The research demonstrates that even without having instructional content that maps directly onto curricular standards, games can prepare students to learn in more formal environments, such as school,” according to Schwartz and Dr. Dylan (Vea, 2014). Dr. Dylan and Schwartz’s study shows that video games can provide a stable foundation on which students can build a deeper understanding of class content. By coupling games with traditional or new teaching tactics, educators can expect most students to start understanding the basics of a course and more advanced concepts much more easily with the multi faceted learning environment that video games and formal education offer when used together.

In a new education system that advocates for the effective use of technology to educate students, video games could be used to their full potential by redefining the way educators and the public perceive knowledge and intelligence. The education system as it is celebrates the crystallized intelligence and memorized knowledge that had its greatest use and prestige during the Enlightenment, as stated by Sir Ken Robinson (2006). Other types of intelligence exist, ones that are hardly touched on or addressed by the education system. Robinson noted that students are rarely required to express their creativity or imagination during their schooling (2006). In a new educational framework, students should have the ability to stray from pen and paper and work in an environment that allows them to explore possibilities and opportunities uninhibited.

Within the realm of math and science, games like *Minecraft* have the potential to improve education. Researcher David Smeaton addressed the potential uses of *Minecraft* in science and math education when he wrote, “During construction of large scale projects, learners might need to calculate the number of blocks required to complete the project. Angles and distances can be calculated too, along with speed, weight and trajectory” (2012, p. 7). In terms of the relative success of the use of *Minecraft* in classes, Smeaton observed that 88% of respondents who participated in his teacher survey examining the utility of *Minecraft* as an educational tool agreed that *Minecraft* is an effective and useful tool for classroom teaching (2012). The overwhelming support for *Minecraft* and constructionist games like it speaks to the effectiveness of even commercial video games in a learning environment when implemented correctly.

Other than constructionist games, games that employ real world situations can serve well to educate students and make what they learn practical. Games like *Quest Atlantis* place students in situations that ask them to use their problem solving skills to resolve some kind of predicament (Olsen, 2009). *Quest Atlantis* forces students to think for themselves, while simultaneously teaching them scientific concepts and information. Instead of relying mostly on traditional textbooks to disseminate information to students, the education system should use both written text and relevant games to teach students as many useful skills and facts as possible. *Quest Atlantis* supports the previously stated idea posited by professor Daniel Schwartz and Dr. Dylan Arena that combining an educational game with relevant and factual text can yield positive results for students.

To effectively incorporate video games into the education system would reduce the need for books, but video game integration would also entail the purchase of large quantities of

computers and consoles, as well as video game subscriptions for students. A monthly subscription to *Gamestar Mechanic*, which allows users to create their own educational games, costs \$3 per student (Olsen, 2009). Many would argue that the cost of giving every student access to such a tool would outweigh the potential benefits of using video games in class. Even using a game like *Minecraft* would require the purchase of many computers or Xbox 360's, as well as copies of the game. The price of purchasing and maintaining video game equipment alone is enough to deter most educators from trying to incorporate video games into their curricula. However, an educational paradigm that properly utilizes games would not include excessive amounts of equipment or software. Video games cannot and should not be a foundational pillar of an education system, they should only be used as supplementary tools to enhance and change the educational experience and environment. Under this premise, games would not pervade every part of the education system, only the subjects that could overtly reap benefits from their use. For example, an English, foreign language, or history class would not stand to gain much from video games, though experimentation with games could occur in such classes. Initially, math, science, and engineering classes can take the greatest advantage of video games. Professor Daniel Schwartz and Dr. Dylan Arena's experiment with *Space Invaders* confirmed the mathematical utility of video games in a learning environment. Alan Gershenfeld, co-founder and president of E-Line Media, a company that publishes educational games, suggested that, "A full, game-infused curriculum could cost millions of dollars and require ongoing support" (Olsen, 2009, p. 4). While Gershenfeld had some merit in that fully incorporating games into the education system is a very expensive proposition, he neglected the variety of options educators have to marginally reduce the price of using video games in schools.

Keeping in mind the social benefits of games discovered by Granic, Lobel, and Engels, more multiplayer options could be offered to students to reduce costs and support prosocial behavior. By having multiple students work together on a single game, less computers and game consoles are needed, and students do not have a choice but to collaborate and share in order to complete assigned tasks. From a purely economic standpoint, video games are not the most cost effective tools, but by adhering to the idea that video games should not be the driving force in the education system, and by ensuring that resources are used efficiently and with the interests of education in mind, the employment of video games as educational supplements is a sound proposal.

Despite the qualms of the general public and skeptical government officials, video games have the ability to improve students not only in the classroom but also in the real world. Daphne Bavelier's promising findings on the physical benefits of playing action games suggested that video games can be used to aid students with everyday activities as well as school work (2012). So by putting at least some emphasis on various genres of games, schools can prepare students for many of the challenges they will encounter in life. Once again, video games are not the cure-all for education, but they can certainly compensate for some of missing elements of education, as shown by the research detailed by Lisa Bowen regarding the positive effects video games have on creativity (2014). An education system that makes use of video games reveals another world of possibilities for students and teachers, and video games offer the chance to shift education into the 21st century. The amalgamation of the video game industry and the school system can hold a vast amount of possibilities for the future of education and society as a whole.

Bibliography

- Bavelier, Daphne (Presenter). (2012, June). *Your brain on video games*. TEDxCHUV. Video retrieved from www.ted.com.
- Bowen, Lisa. (2014). *Video game play may provide learning, health, social benefits, review finds*. *American Psychological Association*, 41(2), 10. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2014/02/video-game.aspx>
- Engels, Rutger C. M. E., Granic, Isabela, & Lobel, Adam. (2014). *The benefits of playing video games*. *American Psychologist*, 69(1), 66-78. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/amp-a0034857.pdf>.
- Robinson, Ken. (2006, February). *Do schools kill creativity?* TEDxCHUV. Video retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity?language=en.
- Olsen, Stefanie. (2009, November). *Educational Video Games Mix Cool With Purpose*. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/02/technology/02games.html?_r=0.
- Smeaton, David. (2012). *Minecraft as a teaching tool- a statistical study of teachers' experience using minecraft in the classroom*. Griffith University. Retrieved from <https://www.academia.edu>.
- Vea, Tanner. (2014, May). *Video game prepares students to learn statistics, stanford study finds*. *Stanford University*. Retrieved from <https://ed.stanford.edu/news/videogames-can-prepare-students-learn-about-statistics-stanford-study-finds>

Dance is All Around Beneficial to People

As a young child, almost every girl has the dream of becoming a ballerina, dancing in a tutu on her tip toes and dancing Swan Lake. As we grow up, realization comes into play that not everyone can be the next Anna Pavlova, who was a Russian ballet dancer famous for her Dying Swan dance, or the next Misty Copeland, a dancer for the American Ballet Company since 1999, being a dancer could indeed be beneficial, even if one doesn't become the next star on the American Ballet stage. While reading “Why is Dancing So Good for Your Brain?” by Christopher Bergland, I came across many points that showed the neurological benefits of dancing, which then led me to then question what other benefits are from dancing. This led me to the question: what are the overall benefits of dance? From there, I came to this overall conclusion that dance can be extremely beneficial to the individual participating, looking at this through the health, economic, and sociocultural lenses.

Health Lens

While one dances, they follow through basic movements of choreography, flowing from one movement to another. But what one doesn't understand is that with every movement, they are strengthening their mind and their body. Dance, whether it be pointe, hip hop, or even contemporary, it benefits your overall health, body condition, flexibility, and your neurological health. Dance has been proven to have many positive benefits on the human body and mind, though some may argue that it has a negative effect on the way a person's body and mind end up developing. I argue that dance, no matter what type it may be, benefits people in their development, and each form of dance bettering a person in a different way.

Dancers, especially women, have always been seen as very petite individuals with much smaller torsos and elongated legs. Though it is true that most dancers do fit this preconceived idea of their body image, there are many health benefits that people don't think of when they think of dance.

While a dancer moves fluidly through every move, they tend to have to bend themselves in many different ways, and while bending in such unnatural ways, the increase in flexibility can highly benefit someone's posture as well as reduce their risk for injury. Flexibility can increase an individual's range of motion, and as one's range increases, their risk of getting injured is lessened because they are training their body to move in new ways (BetterHealth). With flexibility, there is more benefits linked with it besides being able to bend in odd ways, like a pretzel. While a dancer does many intricate moves, one after the other, they must move very fluidly, to hold their movement as they move across the stage in one solid motion, like moving a pen across paper without picking it up. As one's flexibility is increased through dance, it helps them in multiple activities that are outside of dance. When one's flexibility is increased, it can significantly decrease their risk for getting injuries do to an expanded muscle memory (Human Kinetics). One may argue that dance can be very injury inducing the human body, as dancers' careers have ended due to injuries occurring on the stage, what causes those injuries is often misleading. It isn't dancing itself that injures a dancer, but when a dance movement is incorrectly done, it can put the dancer in a danger zone of injury. Bending the wrong way, not stretching properly, or even not pointing your toe enough while on pointe, can lead to career ending injuries, but with a lot of rehearsing and the teaching of proper technique, it can lead to a great muscle memory. Also, with an increased flexibility range, it can improve the posture in which a person sits and stands. People tend to slouch a lot, which over time takes a toll on their spine, resulting in backaches, scoliosis, and arthritis. While dancing, implied that correct form is being used,

it helps to naturally straighten the spine, aiding in a more upright posture when one stands or sits.

While one's flexibility is highly benefitted while dancing, the overall health of an individual is positively affected. The overall health of a dancer has to be on the better side, seeing that they are active for hours at a time. Dieting is a bit overstatement as to the health of a dancer, its more of just being cautious as to what they eat. As some may see the body type of a dancer as petite, it isn't all just skin and bones as some have created the rumor of. Dancers tend to grow to become very muscular, especially in their calves and in their lower body area. Their legs tend to build up a lot of muscle since for hours they are on them. Though dancers do tend to hold a smaller body frame compared to other people, it isn't because of anything unhealthy but instead due to extensive exercise and a balanced diet. Dancers tend to have smaller bodies to help them move more fluidly as they dance, and with smaller, thinner bodies, they can move in ways many others can't (BetterHealth). Many people link dancing and the size of a dancer to eating disorders, and there is evidence that shows they are two connecting things. With eating disorders, it is ten times more likely that a dancer will have an eating disorder, compared to a person who isn't a dancer (BBC News). This isn't the fault of dance at all, but more of the mindset of the dancer. In fact, all professional dance companies have their dancers report to nutritionists that give them a balanced meal plan to follow so that they don't end up starving themselves or throwing up after they eat to have that dancer physique. The dancer's physical health isn't the only thing benefitted, but also their mental health. Through many studies, one of which done by Richard Powers, it was proven that dance could in fact make you smarter. While dance has already been proven to be good for muscle memory, it also can aid in a great reduction to the formation of dementia. In a study done on aging adults, they were put into dance classes to dance frequently, and as a result there was a 76% reduction rate to the formation and progression of dementia, as opposed to activities such as reading and playing golf (Stanford Dance). Also, according to Stanford Dance and the study done by Richard Powers proved that while exercising those brain cells in extensive practice such as dance when you memorize a routine can help in the long run with memory when some of those older brain cells are lost.

Sociocultural Lens

In the world of dance, there is a linked stereotypical image of girls in pink tutus dancing across a room on pointe or in a leotard dancing in lines at the bar. But it isn't always that at all. The dancing community as a whole has opened up its doors to talent ranging from many races and isn't just for women anymore. Though there is still a consistently uneven ratio of women to men in the dancing community, it has become less of an issue to find male partners for women in the dance studio. While looking at the statistics of men versus women in the studio, it's apparent that men are now getting into dance more and more. As opposed to older times when men would not enter a dance studio because it was considered "weak, feminine, gay, or unathletic" (Teaching Tolerance). But it is the welcome community of dance that has slashed those stereotypes, instead attempting to create a strong image for men that they aren't weak just because they wear tights or can move their bodies in ways other males can't. There is always this unwelcoming image for males that dance, especially those involved in ballet and tap, people seeing it as a dance made for women. Males in the dance community and there the lack of is not about the male not being comfortable with them being there, because as opposed to girls being put into dance at an early age by their parents, boys are deciding at a later age that they would like to be put into dance and start that. Boys are getting more comfortable with the idea of putting on those

tights and dancing side by side by a female, opening a whole new door to gender equality. It's no longer about dance being just for females, because as males are jumping into the world of dance, it is tearing down that wall of gender inequality and putting an end to the negative attitude attached to idea of men joining the dance community. In fact, those stereotypes that are labeled to males as lesser because they dance, don't really bring down the male dancer but instead empower them. "Ironically, the stereotype of the sissy male dancer have given rise to a male dancer who is anything but." (Newsweek). The slander against male dancers has empowered them to show they aren't weak or anything lesser than a female dancer, pushing more and more males to dance, really crushing the social gender divide.

Economic Lens

Though dancing is a dream for many little girls, the parents are the real one's that witness the bills racking up from the small dream. As one may not realize when first buying those first pair of pointe shoes, they begin to rack up with every two months, new pointe shoes are needed as the old ones tend to get too worn out to be able to dance on without a higher risk of injuring one's self. But as they tally up, the bill rises, then turning into hundreds of dollars that then need to be paid, and that's just for the attire for dance. Classes themselves are also extremely expensive. For example, the Kansas City Ballet Company offers classes for their more experienced dancers 6 days a week, and for a month, their fees are \$600 a month. That can put a pretty big dent into the family wallet. But, it isn't all just negative when it comes to dance finances. Though it can cost a pretty penny with all of the added classes and apparel, dance can be very beneficial in the end. When it comes to becoming a professional dancer, the income can be very rewarding. According to WetPaint.com, a professional dancer on the well-known show *Dancing With The Stars* can come out with up to \$5,200 per episode, and with one episode per week, they make about \$10,400 every pay period, as opposed to when they were paid only \$1000 per week when dance wasn't as popular (WetPaint). A professional dancer, especially one good enough to be on *Dancing with the Stars* can come out making it big, bringing in money more than most careers do in a few months. Not only is it beneficial to the dancer, but dance itself in the industry has boosted the economic profit in the Hollywood industry. The famous *Step Up* movie franchise had proven to be one of the most successful dance movie series ever created, bringing in a collective total of \$215.7 million to the Hollywood industry (FilmSite). While acting is a key part in movies, in these movies they were looking for those professional dancers to really be able to take on the real life dance technique and dance routines throughout the entire movie. Dance has significantly benefited the economic points in Hollywood and though it may cost a pretty penny in the beginning, the end result of possibly getting a \$10,400 check every two weeks makes up for those \$600 lessons.

Conclusion

Dancing is more than just girls in tutus, using pointe shoes to move across a stage on their tip toes. It has turned into a statement. A statement of health, a gender equality statement and also an economic eye opener to how much it's changed and benefitted our entire economy in terms of entertainment. Dance may be a penny snatcher, and may be risky, but in the end, it beneficially affects the person health wise, self-esteem wise, and also economically.

Sources Cited

"All-Time Top Film Franchises - Box Office." *All-Time Top Film Franchises - Box Office*. AMC, n.d. Web. 28 Mar. 2015.

Bergland, Christopher. "Why Is Dancing So Good for Your Brain?" *Psychology Today*. N.p., 1 Oct. 2013. Web. 28 Mar. 2015.

Carbone, Gina. "How Much Do The Dancing With The Stars Pros Make." *Wet Paint*. Wet Paint, 11 Sept. 2014. Web.

"Dance - Health Benefits - Better Health Channel." *Better Health Channel*. Better Health Channel, n.d. Web. 28 Mar. 2015.

KC Ballet Company. Kansas City Ballet, n.d. Web.

Powers, Richard. "Dancing Makes You Smarter." *Dancing Makes You Smarter*. Stanford Dance, n.d. Web. 28 Mar. 2015.

Thomas, Jill E. "Exploring Gender Stereotypes Through Dance." *Tolerance.org*. Teaching Tolerance, 30 June 2011. Web.

AP[®] SEMINAR
2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

Performance Task 2 — Individual Written Argument

Overview

This prompt was intended to:

- Create an opportunity to enter into academic conversation;
- Create an academic experience to prepare students for entry-level college writing;
- Assess students' ability to generate a relevant research question based on provided stimulus material;
- Assess students' ability to make a statement/claim with appropriate commentary to support a position or argument;
- Assess students' ability to thoroughly synthesize other's ideas with one's own interpretation;
- Assess students' ability to explore and evaluate multiple perspectives and derive a position in alignment with the evidence provided;
- Assess students' ability to identify scholarly sources with appropriate citation;
- Assess students' ability to understand the difference between opinion and evidence;
- Assess students' ability to analyze body of work/read/devise thesis and then create an argument that involves complexity;
- Assess students' ability to support claims and ground originality of thought in synthesis and analysis;
- Assess students' ability to generate responses that successfully incorporate a range of sources, including peer reviewed work;
- Assess students' ability to not merely acknowledge, but to evaluate different perspectives;
- Assess students' ability to read and understand a variety of complex texts; and
- Assess students' ability to conduct scholarly and responsible research and articulate an evidence-based argument that clearly communicates the conclusion, solution, or answer to the stated research question.

Sample: A

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Context — Row 1 Score: 6

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Perspective — Row 2 Score: 6

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 3 Score: 6

Content Area: Analyzing and Evaluating Evidence — Row 4 Score: 6

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 5 Score: 6

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 6 Score: 6

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 7 Score: 3

Content Area: Grammar and Style — Row 8 Score: 3

HIGH SAMPLE RESPONSE – Implications of Monetary Incentives on Students

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Context — Row 1

The response earned 6 points for this row because it identifies a complex research question: "What are the ethical, educational, and cultural implications of monetary incentives on child development?" This question provides an appropriate scope for the performance task and leads to investigating multiple perspectives on the topic. The argument's connection to the source material could be stronger; however, a connection to Hurley's article is discussed in the introduction and makes a connection between the argument's area of inquiry and the source material.

AP[®] SEMINAR
2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

Performance Task 2 — Individual Written Argument

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Perspective — Row 2

The response earned 6 points for this row because it evaluates multiple perspectives: psychological, ethical, behavioral, educational, and cultural, and it considers some of the implications of these perspectives. Additionally, competition is suggested as an additional perspective that functions as a counterargument. The argument then offers Kohn's study, which presents information suggesting competition may be detrimental to child development, and in so doing, the argument considers both the perspective and its limitations.

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 3

The response earned 6 points for this row because it accurately and thoroughly interprets and synthesizes evidence from a wide range of sources. Beyond the fact that 18 sources are used, they range from peer-reviewed journals to *Working Mother* Magazine to Levitt & Dubner's book *Freakonomics*, exploring the various perspectives included in the argument.

Content Area: Analyzing and Evaluating Evidence — Row 4

The response earned 6 points for this row because it explicitly distinguishes among various pieces of evidence in terms of their relevance and credibility. For the source Warnehen & Tomasello, the argument includes that it is a 2008 study found in the *American Psychological Association Journal* and validates the researchers' credentials by stating that they are from the department of developmental and comparative psychology at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. The inclusion of the Richins/Chaplin study, the articulation of their credentials, and the explanation of the study itself show intentionality about source selection based on credibility and relevance.

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 5

The response earned 6 points for this row because it is logically organized, well-reasoned, and complex — each section has its own set of conclusions. For example, at the end of the Context section, the following conclusion is drawn: "If an external motivator is excessive, associations can form which link the activity to the external motivator and thus undermine intrinsic interest." The end of the argument offers solutions that are unambiguously linked to evidence and are specific with regard to the consideration of use of monetary rewards in education.

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 6

The response earned 6 points for this row because it clearly and convincingly uses commentary to link claims and evidence, referencing, for example a 1937 article to support the claim with the commentary that no long-term research has been done to corroborate that it is still effective: "...incentives have existed in education for decades."

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 7

The response earned 3 points for this row because it appears to accurately attribute and cite all sources used, and information offered as fact is consistently attributed to a source. Further, the bibliography and in-text citation match and the bibliography, which is extensive, is consistent and complete.

Content Area: Grammar and Style — Row 8

The response earned 3 points for this row because it contains few flaws in grammar and style; it is well-written, flows well, and clearly communicates to the reader, logically arriving at a convincing answer to the initially stated research question.

AP[®] SEMINAR
2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

Performance Task 2 — Individual Written Argument

Sample: B

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Context — Row 1 Score: 4

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Perspective — Row 2 Score: 4

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 3 Score: 4

Content Area: Analyzing and Evaluating Evidence — Row 4 Score: 2

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 5 Score: 4

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 6 Score: 4

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 7 Score: 2

Content Area: Grammar and Style — Row 8 Score: 3

MEDIUM SAMPLE RESPONSE – Video Games and Education

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Context — Row 1

The response earned 4 points for this row because it identifies a research question that is reasonable in scope. However, from the outset, the question communicates an inherent bias towards the benefits of video games. Additionally, the two-part nature of the question: “What are the beneficial effects of video games, and how can the education system be restructured to effectively incorporate video games?” creates a lack of clear focus for the area of inquiry by addressing two separate concepts. The argument mentions the Locke piece from the stimulus materials and briefly explains the connection to the topic, but this connection is superficial.

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Perspective — Row 2

The response earned 4 points for this row because it identifies multiple perspectives in the discussion, including academic and social benefits of games as well as benefits and drawbacks of incorporating video games into the educational system. While it promises and then offers some discussion of perspectives and objections, they are not fully explored. Some of the explanation of the implications or limitations of these perspectives is touched on or mentioned but is unsubstantiated or not thoroughly developed.

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 3

The response earned 4 points for this row because it uses a combination of evidence — but from a fairly narrow range of sources. It offers some mix of peer-reviewed sources, news sources, and TED talks, but the sources are from a limited range in terms of discipline, perspective, and source type, focusing much more heavily on one area of the argument. And, while there is evidence, there is inconsistent synthesis of the evidence/information into the argument.

Content Area: Analyzing and Evaluating Evidence — Row 4

The response earned 2 points for this row because it incorporates evidence throughout in an effort to support its claims but does not distinguish among the sources explicitly to address relevance and credibility of evidence used. All sources are treated as equally valid and valuable, with general references to “researchers” or with heavy reliance on what “Sir Ken Robinson” contributed to the discussion, with no rationale for his inclusion as an expert. There is no indication that the student was intentional in selection of evidence beyond the occasional reference to a title or associated institution.

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 5

The response earned 4 points for this row because it is relatively organized but is overly simplistic in nature. While specific claims are mentioned throughout the argument, the final conclusion reached is overly general and does not offer any substantial or specific resolution or solution to the issue. The final offering — “The amalgamation of the video game industry and the school system can hold a vast amount

AP[®] SEMINAR
2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

Performance Task 2 — Individual Written Argument

of possibilities for the future of education and society as a whole — is certainly related to the argument's claims but is very general and does not fully address the research question stated at the outset of the paper.

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 6

The response earned 4 points for this row because it offers some evidence in support of the claims, but the commentary linking the claims and evidence is inconsistently offered. Some points are made solely by a piece of evidence connected to the claim but with no student contribution to develop the connection or idea. An example of this can be found in the first full paragraph on page two that discusses the use of “Call of Duty.”

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 7

The response earned 2 points for this row because it attributes and cites most of the sources and information with a reasonable amount of accuracy, and while there are both stylistic and mechanical errors in attribution, these are relatively minor and the bibliography appears to be consistent and complete.

Content Area: Grammar and Style — Row 8

The response earned 3 points for this row because it is well-written, communicates clearly to the reader, and contains few grammatical or stylistic flaws.

Sample: C

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Context — Row 1 Score: 2

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Perspective — Row 2 Score: 2

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 3 Score: 4

Content Area: Analyzing and Evaluating Evidence — Row 4 Score: 2

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 5 Score: 2

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 6 Score: 4

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 7 Score: 1

Content Area: Grammar and Style — Row 8 Score: 2

LOW SAMPLE RESPONSE – Dance is All Around Beneficial to People

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Context — Row 1

The response earned 2 points for this row because the argument includes a research question — “What are the overall benefits of dance?” — but the question is overly broad in scope. The research question is poorly connected to the source material. The question is only mentioned in the introduction, and there is no explicit connection or further reference or commentary made.

Content Area: Understanding and Analyzing Perspective — Row 2

The response earned 2 points for this row because the argument attempts to address multiple lenses (health, socio-cultural, and economic) through which to evaluate dance. Although it mentions the possibility of negative effects, the argument dismisses the idea and identifies only very similar perspectives through different lenses. The argument omits mention of possible objections, limitations, or any negative implications of the overall perspective that dance is beneficial.

AP[®] SEMINAR
2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

Performance Task 2 — Individual Written Argument

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 3

The response earned 4 points for this row because the argument incorporates some combination of evidence from sources, including sources from Stanford Dance and *Psychology Today*. However, the range of sources is narrow. The evidence is not effectively interpreted or synthesized (e.g., the information concerning male dancers in the “Socio-cultural Lens”). While there is a narrow range and treatment of the sources included, the argument barely meets the “medium” category threshold for its collection of evidence.

Content Area: Analyzing and Evaluating Evidence — Row 4

The response earned 2 points for this row because the argument incorporates cited evidence throughout but does not distinguish among the sources explicitly to address relevance and credibility of evidence used. In addition, all sources are treated as equally relevant and credible. There is no explanation of why they warrant inclusion as support of the argument, and there is no distinction made between the credibility of a source such as *Newsweek* and a “filmsite” citation.

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 5

The response earned 2 points for this row because the argument offers an argument that is disorganized and overly general in its discussion about the benefits of dance. The argument presents no specific resolutions, conclusions, or solutions. It merely restates ideas presented earlier in the argument in very basic summary, offering the idea that dance is beneficial to health and self-esteem.

Content Area: Building and Communicating an Argument — Row 6

The response earned 4 points for this row because the argument uses minimal commentary to link claims and evidence. The argument offers a claim and evidence with only a brief connection between the two. For example, the discussion of the connection between dance and flexibility, along with the benefits of flexibility offers some connection of evidence and claim via minimal commentary. The claims about the different benefits of dance throughout the paper are supported by some evidence, and although commentary is included, it is often unclear and incomplete in establishing a logical connection to the argument’s premise.

Content Area: Selecting and Using Evidence — Row 7

The response earned 1 point for this row because the argument includes many errors in attribution and citation. In addition, information is often stated as fact with no supporting source (e.g., the discussion of dancers having always been seen as petite with elongated legs; statements about injuries; or, career-ending injuries from a failure to point toes properly). Also, the bibliography (Sources Cited) is inconsistent in style and format.

Content Area: Grammar and Style — Row 8

The response earned 2 points for this row because the argument contains some minimal flaws in grammar and style that interfere with the flow of ideas and ultimate communication. For example, there are blocks of writing that are not appropriately separated into paragraphs, as well as some sentences that lack clarity and are difficult to understand.