

# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2016 SCORING GUIDELINES

## AP Research Performance Task Rubric: Academic Paper

Content Area	Performance Levels		
<b>1 Understand and Analyze Context</b>	The paper identifies the topic of inquiry.  2	The paper identifies the topic, and describes the purpose and focus of the inquiry.  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 works and/or summarizes a single perspective on the student’s topic of inquiry.  2	The paper summarizes, individually, previous works representing multiple perspectives about the student’s topic of inquiry.  4	The paper explains the relationships among multiple 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 the approach, method, or process.  5	The paper provides a logical rationale 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 argument, conclusion or understanding, 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 an argument, conclusion, or new understanding that the paper justifies by explaining the links between evidence with claims.  5	The paper presents an argument, conclusion or new understanding that acknowledges and explains the consequences 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 through the compilation of relevant and sufficient evidence.  4	The paper demonstrates a compelling argument through effective interpretation and synthesis of the evidence and through 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

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**2016 SCORING GUIDELINES**

<b>9 Apply Conventions</b>	The paper's use of grammar, style and mechanics convey the student's ideas; however, errors interfere with communication and/or credibility.	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.	The paper's word choice and syntax enhances communication through variety, emphasis, and precision.
	1	2	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 2016 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, and how they employed it;
- Develop and present their own argument, conclusion, or new understanding;
- Support their conclusion through the compilation, use, and synthesis of relevant and significant evidence;
- 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.

## Minds, Media and Money... The Control over Racism

Racism has been a systematic issue since the beginning of time. Some even consider racism a part of human nature; believing that it has always existed and will never cease to exist. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines racism as “a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race”. Many people do not realize that racism was not always a form of systematic oppression. Before such oppression existed people didn’t classify themselves by race. It wasn’t until the slave trade occurred that the division between races was prominent.

The term “racism” that people reference today originated from the slave trade. The racist tensions during the slave trade caused the lack of equality, freedom and happiness. Racism did not cease to exist after the Africans were declared free from slavery – it then led to several decades of segregation between blacks and white. White people believed they were superior to people of color (Hispanics, Blacks and Asians). ([http://socialistworker.org/2002-2/431/431\\_08\\_Racism.shtml](http://socialistworker.org/2002-2/431/431_08_Racism.shtml)). During the mid-1900’s these racist tensions reached an extreme height being that the segregation between blacks and white reached an all-time high. Blacks could not attend the same schools as white, eat in the same restaurants as whites, or use the same bathroom as whites. During this time racism was very evident because of the immense violence and police brutality. Many individuals neglect to realize that racism exist all over the world. One form of racism is reverse racism where someone acts prejudice to their own race. Similarly to the existence of racism from the beginning of time, racism still exists today – the exception is that racism is now seen in different forms. Racism has advanced in today’s age because it is controlled by people’s minds, controlled by the media and controlled by money.

All three aspects of this paper – the mind, the media and money – control one another and in turn controls racism. Firstly when we discuss the mind, we are discussing the thought process in the mind which takes place in the frontal lobe of the brain, specifically the left side of the brain. (NIH, 2011) - it is believed that many racist motives come from the mind- which forms judgements of people, arguments about people and perceptions of different people. But what some people fail to realize is that if the world was pure from the beginning, our minds would not form these perceptions of people of different races, backgrounds and ethnicities.

Human beings have accustomed themselves to view certain people in a negative light. The novel *Racism* by Mary E. Williams displays racism in many different aspects. The book is developed by several authors into several chapters which displays a question and poses two points of view for each question. For instance the question for chapter one states: “Is Racism a Serious Problem” – within that chapter the authors Halford H. Fairchild, Marica Cantarella, Sarah E. Hinlicky and Peter L. DeGroote, all give reasons and evidence to why racism is still a serious problem, while Deroy Murdock, Orlando Patterson and Samuel Francis give reasons to why racism is not a serious problem and will soon end. The author’s purpose for writing this is to explore the many social, political, and economic controversies dominating the national and international scenes of racism today (Mary E. Williams – *Racism*, pg. 10-11). The excerpts from the novel are not as extensive but still give an insight to the different views displayed with in the novel. The reason this novel is keen to the topic of racism because it shows both sides to racism. Not every single individual is racist, this novel contributes to some theories as to why many people may be racist, but it also shines light on an issue that does not directly affect everyone. This is where the “mind” concept comes into play. This book deals with the concepts in which we form from our own minds. If we did not have the intellect that we have today as human

beings, such a thing as racism would not exist. But because of the advancement of our minds and the way we think, many humans tend to discriminate to things unknown to them and sometimes even to their own races.

The media is known as one of the greatest mediums used to place racism on a platform. The media has always been a platform for minorities whether it be the LGBT community or minority races community. To go further in depth, the media portrays racism as a conflict between all types of people – whether it be different nations, communities or social classes. The author of “Racism and Mass Media”, Paul Hartmann analyzes and discuss the effects of media and how it is linked to racism. The book uses examples to portray this point of view. For instance the titles of the chapters include ““The British Response to Coloured Immigration, “British Images of the Black Man, “The Study of Prejudice, “The Design of the Study, “Attitudes and the Mass Media, “Definitions of the Situation, “Race in the British Press, “The News Media and Race Relations, “The Entertainment Media," and “Conclusion”. The book is based on information from Great Britain but still correlates with the racism and prejudice topic because racism occurs all around the world, meaning that there is just as much prejudice in Britain as there is in the United States. The book analyzes the treatment of race by mass media, by examining through survey data. (<http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED106879> ).

In the past year the media in the United States has covered racism and police brutality quite often. From the death of Travon Martin to Sandra Bland, police brutality and racism have been linked together. There is even a novel entitled “Are Cop’s Racist”, which analyzes and demonstrates several aspects of what is going on in the media today. Although police brutality has existed since the early civil rights era, its publicity in today day and age has yet to remain stagnant. Racial profiling is a huge issue that goes hand in hand with how the police officers treat

people of color. Racial profiling has also been displayed in the media, and it creates an image of brutality and injustice for the individuals who watch the news. Statistics show that 776 people have been killed by police officers in 2015 – but 161 of them were unarmed during the time of the shooting. Because of statistics like this, people believe all police officers are bad. No one wants to believe in the system that police officers are supposed to protect us. Even shows like “Blackish” on ABC, have included the perspective of racial injustice within the show. The episode of Black-ish entitled “Hope”, is a clear depiction of the different views on the ways of the world and how different age groups feel about it. The writer uses a common element in the media today (Black Lives) to show how hope can help people believe that a better tomorrow is coming. This episode of Black-ish displays the different aspects of hope because of the fear developed by the daughter, the positivity displayed by the mother, and the denial portrayed by the father and grandparents. The reason this show correlates with the topic of racism, media, and minds is that it shows the development of racism in the lives of many individuals. Not only does this episode show the correlation between black lives and media, but it also demonstrates the effect of media and racism and how it controls and effects the minds of a diverse range of people.

Racism control over the media is extremely powerful, it’s displayed not only in television shows but also in news outlets and social media. A student from Yale University, by the name of Stephen Balkaran wrote an essay entitled “Mass Media and Racism” that entails how media really controls people and how they view other people. Although his argument extends from the view of how African American’s are treated because of the racism in mass media, people consider his argument to be valid but also bias. African Americans are not the only people who

are subjected to racism in the mass media, but the stigma of racism in the media of the United States is directed mainly towards African American's. "Mass media has played and will continue to play a crucial role in the way white Americans perceive African-Americans. As a result of the overwhelming media focus on crime, drug use, gang violence, and other forms of anti-social behavior among African-Americans, the media have fostered a distorted and pernicious public perception of African-American" (Balkaran, *Mass Media and racism*). Balkaran includes a variety of facts, from statistical information of the wages on African American's and how it varies from that of a white man. He includes the mind corruption aspect, the money corruption aspect and the media corruption and how it all correlates with racism. Balkaran also develops a logical fact of the Segmentation theory also known as the Divide and rule theory, which was developed by Michael Reich. "In the 1980's, Michael Reich developed the Segmentation Theory or the Divide and Rule, which attempted to explain racism from an economic point of view. In this theory, Reich proposes that the ultimate goal in society is to maximize profits. As a result, the exploiters will attempt to use any means to: (1) suppress higher wages among the exploited class, (2) weaken the bargaining power of the working class, often by attempting to split it along racial lines, (3) promote prejudices, (4) segregate the black community, (5) ensure that the elite benefit from the creation of stereotypes and racial prejudices against the black community." (Balkaran, *Mass Media and racism*). One thing that is evident when it comes to racism is that everyone wants their own perspective to be the correct one. There are many different perspectives on racism, some people feel as though it doesn't exist, while others clearly have felt the impact of racism and they have been personally affected by the outcome of racist deliberations. Balkaran's conclusion is rather solid but it can also be arguable. "The media have and will continue to portray a self-serving negative stereotype of the African-American



community. The societal and economic factors of racism have become more than just a bias. They are also a profitable industry, in which the elite will continue to suppress the lower class in order to maximize profits. According to Harvard professor Cornell West, 1 percent of the elite holds some 48 percent of America's wealth. This means that media, racism, and stereotypes will continue to be employed so that those elite can be sure of their continuing economic stability". The information provided throughout Balkaran's excerpt provide an insight to why his conclusion can be considered valid.

Many individuals do not think of how racism can physically and psychologically affect the mind. There are numerous articles that develop an explanation of how racism can affect ones mental health- especially if the racist acts are towards them. However racism can also affect one's mental health if they are the one being racist towards another individual. An article entitled "Racism Harmful to Mental and Physical Health" uses statistics to display racism's effect , " A U.S. study found that discrimination increased mortality (rates of death) among African Americans compared to whites in a large sample (N=4154) of older ad" (Daniels, 2009). This article underlines the statistical information about how racism truly can effect one's mind and state of being. Studies even show that living in a prejudice environment or racist environment can lead some individuals to become clinically insane and psychopaths. Racist tensions and acts can not only lead to a devolution in one's health but also in there peace of mind. "In terms of mental health, racism costs people their sanity. This article includes a statistical fact proving how racism can affect the minds of people, "One Dutch study of 4,074 people found that those who felt victimized by discrimination and forms of racism were twice as likely to develop psychotic episodes in the following three years. Being on the receiving end of racism creates intense and constant stress which boosts the risk of depression, anxiety and anger." (Daniels,

2009). The disparity of racism is that some individuals believe it doesn't affect everyone, but eventually it will. Whether it is being given or received. Racist actions have caused people to commit suicide or even hate other races simply because of how they were mistreated.

Furthermore to the intensify controversy of racism, many people ask themselves the question of who indeed can be racist. Adam Johnson explains this concept in his Stanford Daily newsletter, explaining the history of the word racism and its concept. He also relates the past with the present day connotation of who can be racist. Johnson starts out by defining racism “What is racism? The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as the “belief that all members of each race possess characteristics, abilities, or qualities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to other races.” (Johnson, 2013). Under this definition, white people can be racist, black people can be racist – anyone can be racist, regardless of skin color.” This quote can indeed look to answer to question originally posed in the opening sentence of this paragraph, however Johnson goes to explain his answer by revolving it around the historical aspect of racism – “Yet beginning in the 1960s, this definition was increasingly rejected; scores of professors in ethnic studies departments and law schools across the nation have instead put forth a new definition. For these scholars, what the dictionaries define as “racism” is considered “prejudice,” and racism is equated to prejudice plus power. This notion of “racism = prejudice + power” surely has its advantages – its ability to explain broader societal trajectories, for instance. Yet some prominent thinkers who begin with this definition of racism ultimately conclude, “Only whites can be racist.” (Johnson, 2013) This quote proves to be powerful because it explains the thought of many human's that only whites can be racist, meanwhile everyone else who doesn't like a race is called “prejudice”. Johnson further explains why people believe only whites can be racist – it is linked to while supremacy and power – however white people are not

always in power so the statement can be rebutted depending on the situation. Racism is an issue that some human beings always use as an excuse not to like another individual and it's extremely unfortunate. Johnson's conclusion gives insight to his entire argument during that article, - "By giving weight to the belief that only whites can be racist, that only white people have power, we are not only being intellectually dishonest and generating racial tension, but beginning to forget the influence that minorities have exercised in guiding this and other nations". Though by all means we should not forget the struggles minorities have faced, we should also refuse to accept flawed and divisive ideology that comes at the expense of reason and equality". His argument is explained by both logos and pathos – he uses logic and facts to allow his readers to understand where he is coming from and why is it relevant to the past and the present. Johnson also appeals to pathos because he makes the reader feel as though they are the ones in the situation at hand, this helps the reader connect more to his topic of racism.

Similarly to racism control over people's minds and also the media, racism has a huge impact on money. Though it may sound cliché racism controls money through people. Racism control over money is just a demonstration of racism effect over economics in general. From the beginning of the work force era in the United States, racism has always been a progressive issue. Starting from the wage difference between white people and every other race. Some people also believe that because of the slave trade era, indentured servants era, and the immigration era white supremacy has overpowered many other races. An article from BET by Dedrick Mohammed exemplifies the thoughts of many people today by entitling his piece "American Money: The economic origins of racism" (Mohammed, 2013). To connect money back to the original two topics of – media and the mind – Mr. Mohammed redefines the uprising of racism. Mr. Mohammed begins his article by stating what he believes the origins of true racism is "Most

people assume that racism is as old as humanity itself. Yet racism as we understand it today is a relatively modern ideology that first took shape in the 17th and 18th century as a moral justification for European conquest, particularly the enslavement of African people, which had become a significant source of wealth for Western imperialist nations”. This quote gives an excerpt into what Mr. Mohammed begins to discuss throughout the article – he then goes into the facts from present times of slavery stating the difference between American slavery and slavery of the Roman Empire. Mohammed states “Though slavery had existed for thousands of years in antiquity, American slavery differed in many ways. Roman slaves had the opportunity to earn their way to freedom while American slaves did not. Roman slavery was also not based on race — they commonly fell into slavery as prisoners of war, kidnapped sailors or as slaves bought outside Roman territory” ( Mohammed, 2013) – this quote serves to transition into Mohammed remaining argument on how American’s slavery added to the increase economic declination of people of different races. The reason Mohammed article adds value to this argument is because of the amount of statistical information given on the topic. By correlating the past history of racism and the present day of economic racism, Mohammed has given an argument which are hard to refute. The use of several other sources in his article also contributes to his argument for instance when he says “Racial inequality, then, has always been defined by economic inequality, as historian Eric Williams succinctly puts it: “Slavery was not born of racism; rather, racism was the consequence of slavery.” Specifically, throughout American history, racism has always been motivated by and defined as a way for white elites to control an unequal share of property” (Mohammed, 2013). The input of another scholarly writer allows the audience to view his argument as factual and correct. Also because he has several series on “American Money” and how it affects African Americans and other reader he is building his accreditation. His use of a

counterargument and then a refutation displays just how much scholarly tendencies Mr. Mohammed has adding to his credibility – “It’s true that African-Americans have gained much ground in terms of civil rights. However, African-Americans have made very little economic progress in too many economic areas. Even before the Great Recession spiked unemployment rates, African-Americans were already mired in a jobs crisis of their own. Black unemployment had remained twice the rate of whites for 60 years. At the start of the recession in 2007, an already-wide wealth disparity existed between communities of color and whites, with Black and brown households owning one-fifth of the typical wealth of white households.” (Mohammed, 2013). The entirety of Mr. Mohammed’s article gives insight to the reader and explains points and topic throughout the article with facts and also he gives a counterargument to refute it, helping the reader better understand how racism correlates with money and the economy.

In closing the connotation of racism has advanced in today’s age because of its immense control over people’s minds, the media and money. The sources above help analyze and argue how and why racism controls all three aspects mentioned through the paper. While some did argue that racism doesn’t exist, the majority sources provide facts and sources of how racism still exist and its impact on the lives of many individual. Though racism in itself is a very broad topic, the breakdown of the specific types of racist attitudes and the effects on the life of people help narrow down the views on this particular topic. Finally, majority of the sources conclude that racism can control people minds negatively, it can control the media and that has been evident for several years now and it can also control money and how fast people move up the chain of wealth.

## Bibliography

1. Cohen, Lisa J., Dr. "The Psychology of Prejudice and Racism." *Psychology Today*. Sussex, 24 Jan. 2011. Web. 07 Oct. 2015. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/handy-psychology->

The Annotated Bibliography on Psychology and Racism: 1974 - 1996 consists of citations taken from the CD-ROM databases of PsycLIT and MEDLINE. Sixteen keywords were used to develop the bibliography that reflected broad areas and interests in psychology. PsycLIT-Journals (1974-1989), PsycLIT-Journals (1990-1996), PsycLIT Chapters and Books and MEDLINE 1990-1996 databases.

2. - Cohen, L. (2011, January 24). The Psychology of Prejudice and Racism. Retrieved January 18, 2016, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/handy-psychology-answers/201101/the-psychology-prejudice-and-racism>

This source uses resources and credible knowledge to identify the causes of prejudice using a scientifically experience. It discusses the stereotypical aspects of racism and how it correlates to psychology. It also talks about the origin of stereotypes the term stereotype as used in social science was first introduced by the journalist Walter Lippmann in 1922.

3. Daniels, J. (2009, April 16). Racism Harmful to Mental and Physical Health -. Retrieved April 4, 2016, from <http://www.racismreview.com/blog/2009/04/16/racism-harmful-to-health/>

This article develops claims and provides logos for the readers to understand her claims. The reason this article is valid in my argument is mainly because it display's how racism has an effect on the minds of people causing deadly and mental situations for them. The article states fact proven by psychologist and scientist as well. The article also displays that racism can take over ones state of being, sanity, and mental stability. Though this article is clearly one on the argumentative side the author display all of the appeals- logos, ethos, and pathos- which on needs for them to see their argument. She especially choose a touchy subject that people actually can relate to, signaling that she knows who her intended audience is.

4. - Chu, J. (2014, July 23). Ku Klux Klan: The Psychology behind Racism. Retrieved January 18 2016, from <http://guardianlv.com/2014/07/ku-klux-klan-the-psychology-behind-racism/>

Chu uses a references of the Ku Klux Klan to allow the readers to understand the connection between Psychology and Racism. The author says "There are theories about the reasons for racism that can be applied to the psychology of racism in the Ku Klux Klan". The author also identifies issues that arise from such racist prejudice - connecting that of racism to a worldwide genocide issue. Discrimination can be linked to more things than the human eye can see, it may be mental and it may be a psychological disorder.

5. Mios, J. (n.d.). Social Psychology--Racism. Retrieved January 19, 2016, from

<https://www.cpp.edu/~jsmio/401/powerpoints/racism.html>

This source is actually a social psychology class syllabus. The professor of this class has created several books of his own and he teaches several different types of psychology at California State Polytechnic University. He talks about how racism deals with power, and the consumption of power can related to a psychological mindset. Racism is the routine, institutionalized mistreatment of a person based on his/her membership in a group on the downside of power.

6. Wright, D. & Taylor, D.M. (2009). "The social psychology of cultural diversity: Social prejudice, stereotyping and [discrimination](#)," *The SAGE Handbook of Social Psychology*, Concise Student Edition. M. Hogg & J. Cooper (Eds.), Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, pps. 361-387.

This novel explains the definitions prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination explicitly. Not only does this n novel define these words, but it also shows the connections between these words. This novel differs from other sources because it gives an insight to cultural diversity, from the places we live to the places we eat. It analyzes our every efforts to be grouped with people who are similar to our own races. Although some racial discriminatory motives may not be intentional, it's a psychological stimulus that sometimes programs us to act a certain way towards our counterpart races.

7. Office of Communications and Public Liaison. (2015, April 17). Brain Basics: Know Your Brain. Retrieved April 4, 2016, from [http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/brain\\_basics/know\\_your\\_brain.htm#Image](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/brain_basics/know_your_brain.htm#Image)

The significance of this web link above is because it gives an insight to the mind. It discusses parts of our brains include the cerebellum, frontal lobe and midbrain. The website displays what part of the brain controls our thoughts. The ironic thing this website portrays to us is the concept of nature vs. nurture. If humans weren't nurtured in how people look and the color of their skin, no one would be racist. However the article conveys the image of the mind, which make me the reader think on the topic racism more heavily. If it wasn't for our influence on one another and how we think, no individual would be racist.

8. A. J. (2013, January 31). Everyone can be racist. Retrieved April 5, 2016, from <http://www.stanforddaily.com/2013/01/31/everyone-can-be-racist/>

The article entitled "Everyone can be racist" displays the point of views that not only white people should be classified as racist. The author Adam's Johnson uses both the appeals of logos and ethos contributes to his analysis of racism and also his argument. Though he has an argument posed through his article it is clear by the end of the argument because of the immense facts and points he gives.

9. Mohammed, Dedrick. "American Money: The Economic Origins of Racism." *BET.com*. Black

Entertainment Television LLC, 5 Feb. 2013. Web. 10 Apr. 2016.

<http://www.bet.com/news/national/2013/02/05/american-money-the-economic-origins-of-racism.html>

<http://www.yale.edu/ypq/articles/oct99/oct99b.html>

<http://www.racismreview.com/blog/2009/04/16/racism-harmful-to-health/>



# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2016 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Academic Paper

### Sample: J

**Content Area: Understand and Analyze Context — Row 1 Score: 2**

**Content Area: Understand and Analyze Argument — Row 2 Score: 4**

**Content Area: Evaluate Sources and Evidence — Row 3 Score: 2**

**Content Area: Research Design — Row 4 Score: 0**

**Content Area: Establish Argument — Row 5 Score: 3**

**Content Area: Select and Use Evidence — Row 6 Score: 2**

**Content Area: Engage Audience — Row 7 Score: 2**

**Content Area: Apply Conventions — Row 8 Score: 2**

**Content Area: Apply Conventions — Row 9 Score: 1**

### LOW SAMPLE RESPONSE

"Minds, Media and Money... The Control over Racism"

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

The response earned 2 points for this row because it explores the topic of racism, but does not successfully focus this topic into a narrower exploration. While the paper does bring in the topics of "mind control" and "money" and attempts to look at these in connection with racism, the additional topics are not used to narrow or focus the inquiry. The paper did not earn 4 points for this row because it does not focus its topic and does not describe a purpose for the investigation. There is not an explicit connection of the area of racism/mind control/money to a larger scholarly community.

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

The response earned 4 points for this row because it clearly summarizes works that explore the topic of racism from different perspectives. This begins on page 2 with the reference to the "novel" *Racism* by Williams and continues to summarize other work with different perspectives, including a television program (*Blackish*), "print media," and Yale student Balkaran. These pieces are related to the paper's topic, but are described separately. The paper did not earn 6 points for this row because it does not discuss the works in relationship to each other; rather it presents them as a list of evidence that forms the bulk of the paper and serves as the paper's argument rather than being used as evidence connected to and in support of the author's own argument.

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

The response earned 2 points for this row because it discusses sources but does not offer an explanation or rationale for the choices of sources. The sources consist of pop-culture examples without rationale for their use, including a television episode with references to "the writer" (unnamed) but no discussion of the writer or his/her credibility (p. 14). Other sources, including a student from Yale University (p. 4), are likewise not substantiated as credible or relevant. The paper did not earn 4 points because it does not make clear, implicitly or explicitly, why the selected sources are appropriate for the area of inquiry or to support the argument.

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

The response earned 0 points for this row because it does not articulate any approach, method, or process to conduct the inquiry in pursuit of an answer to a research question. While it is clear that the conclusions made in the paper result from some research, the response does not earn 1 point because there is no stated or apparent method.

# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2016 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Academic Paper

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

The response earned 3 points for this row because it presents an oversimplified argument about racism controlling culture, the media contributing to that control, and money being a factor in the equation. This argument is generally driven by the sources summarized in the body of the paper rather than by the student having made an independent argument. The argument is difficult to follow as a result. The paper functions more as an extended review of literature than as an evidence-based argument to answer a stated research question. There are a number of unsupported claims in the paper (e.g., "During the mid-1900's these racist tensions reached an extreme height being that the segregation between blacks and white reached an all-time high," p. 1). The paper did not earn 5 points for this row because it does not offer a new understanding or conclusion that is based on a logically constructed set of evidence-supported claims. The ultimate conclusion — "The majority of the sources conclude that racism can control people's minds negatively, it can control the media and that has been evident for several years now and it can also control money and how fast people move up the chain of wealth" (p. 10) — is made without links to evidence.

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

The response earned 2 points for this row because it offers a series of summarized sources on the topic of racism. The sources' statements are ultimately not sufficient to serve as evidence for the paper's vast assertion that racism controls people's minds, the media, and money, and that it will continue to do so in the future (see p. 10). The paper did not earn 4 points for this row because the conclusion stated at the end of the paper is so broad that the series of sources are not enough to serve as credible support for it.

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

The response earned 2 points for this row because, although it does not have titled sections, it is organized, and its organization conveys the paper's message. (There is no requirement that papers be organized in a particular way, since expectations about structure vary by discipline and purpose.) The paper did not earn 3 points for this row because, while it is possible to follow the paper's message of racism being a controlling factor in society, the organization does not enhance the ability of the reader to understand the message.

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

The response earned 2 points for this row because it cites and attributes others' work in some places and fails to do so in others. There are facts stated and claims made that are not substantiated with evidence that, although not plagiarism, indicate considerable lapses in citation and attribution. See, for example, the second paragraph of page 1, which makes factual statements about the history of slavery and racial segregation that are not credited to a source or cited. The paper did not earn 4 points for this row because of the many factual statements that are not supported with evidence or citation. Such omissions of citation indicate a lack of attention to attributing work to others.

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

The response earned 1 point for this row because it contains errors that at times get in the way of the reader, impeding understanding of the argument. Because of errors in grammar and mechanics, it is sometimes difficult to follow the paper's meaning (e.g., "Racism control over money is just a demonstration of racism effect over economics in general. From the beginning of the work force era in the United States, racism has always been a progressive issue. Starting from the wage difference between white people and every other race," p. 8). The paper did not earn 2 points for this row because there are enough issues with conventions, syntax, and style that the reader must at times re-read sections to understand meaning.