

## Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2017 AP<sup>®</sup> Chinese Language and Culture Free-Response Questions

• Number of Readers	136			
<b>Total Group</b>				
• Number of Students Scored	13,091			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	9,008	68.8	
	4	1,530	11.7	
	3	1,580	12.1	
	2	410	3.1	
	1	563	4.3	
• Global Mean	4.38			
<b>Standard Group*</b>				
• Number of Students Scored	2,880			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	628	21.8	
	4	455	15.8	
	3	943	32.7	
	2	348	12.1	
	1	506	17.6	
• Global Mean	3.12			

The following comments on the 2017 free-response questions for AP<sup>®</sup> Chinese Language and Culture were written by the Chief Reader, Cecilia Chang of Williams College. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

\*\* Standard students generally receive most of their foreign language training in U.S. schools. They did not indicate on their answer sheet that they regularly speak or hear the foreign language of the exam, or that they have lived for one month or more in a country where the language is spoken.

**Question #1****Task:** Presentational Writing — Story Narration**Max. Points:** 6**Total Group Mean Score:** 4.33**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.46***What were responses expected to demonstrate in their response to this question?***

This task assessed writing ability in the presentational mode of communication by requiring students to narrate a story, depicted in a series of four pictures, as if writing to a friend. Students should demonstrate their ability to produce paragraph-level discourse with linguistic accuracy using appropriate transitional elements and cohesive devices, and their narration should reflect a clear progression of ideas, including a beginning, a middle, and an end. Students were allotted 15 minutes for this task, the successful completion of which requires the ability to use the language to narrate a complete and coherent story based on the picture sequence.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

The mean score for the Standard Group was 3.46 out of a possible 6 points, higher than last year's mean score of 3.30. The mean score for the Total Group was 4.33, higher than last year's mean score of 3.87.

- Some responses showed influence from English, such as incorrect use 是 and 和, as well as wrong word order and repeated use of English words.
- Some responses contained typos that obscured meaning.
- While the question calls for a complete and coherent narration of the picture sequence, some students were unsuccessful in doing so for a variety of reasons, which can be categorized as follows:
  1. Spending too much time on describing one or two particular pictures or paying too much attention to details. In these cases, students were unable to complete a coherent narration of the story sequence.
  2. Failing to use proper transitional elements or cohesive devices, resulting in a list-like description of the pictures.
  3. Mixing up details in different pictures and providing a narration that was inconsistent with the pictures.
  4. Employing minimal appropriate vocabulary and limited grammatical structures, with errors that obscured meaning.

***What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?***

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
今天是我的祖母生日派对。我的祖母是很啦。	今天是奶奶的六十岁生日，为了庆祝奶奶的六十大寿亲戚们决定大家久违的聚起来为奶奶开生日 宴会。
今天是我奶奶亏了。我到了在奶奶家。我没有 gift。我看我弟弟。" 走吧，我要 gift。" 我弟弟 给我 gift。我妈妈 opened 门。	今天是奶奶的八十大寿，所有亲朋好友都来帮她贺寿... 小黑也如往年一样早早的就赶来了奶奶 家。可是当他正准备敲门的时候... 突然想起来今天一早他急急忙忙出门的时候把送奶奶的生日礼 物遗漏在家里，就当 他苦恼不知道就在这时候他看见了另一个来帮奶奶贺寿的叔叔拿着一大束鲜 花向家里走来，他灵机一动只好请求叔叔能否把鲜花分成两束。叔叔答应后他们两人都分别抱着一束鲜花走进了奶奶家里。

**Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

- Remind students that since the AP exam is a performance-based assessment, it is important to address the question *directly* and *fully* – task completion takes first priority.
- Teachers should remind students that narrating a coherent story is different from simply describing the pictures: the task requires telling a story that is consistent with the pictures, not merely describing each picture. Teachers should provide students with vocabulary and expressions for successfully opening, continuing, and concluding a story.
- Students should look closely at the pictures and have a full understanding of the development of the story, especially its problem and solution, before they begin to write.
- Students should not give priority to describing the details of the pictures over completing a coherent narration of the story.
- Teachers should strive to build their students' vocabulary about everyday situations, particularly resolving everyday problems, as those are the topics that students will encounter in the story narration task.
- Teachers should help their students build a repertoire of transitional phrases and cohesive devices.
- Teachers should provide opportunities for students to develop the ability to construct coherent discourse while using appropriate transitional elements and cohesive devices.

**What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?**

- Teachers should view the AP World Languages and Cultures Online Module: *Presentation Communication: A Focus on Writing*, by Federica Santini, to gain some strategies to build their students' performance in Presentational Writing. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules>
- Teachers should access the scoring guidelines and share them so students will have realistic expectations for performance in this task. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should access one or more of the Story Narration prompts from 2007-2017 and their associated student samples of high-, mid- and low-performances and share them so students can gain insight into performance vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture> Teachers should use the remaining Story Narration prompts from 2007-2017 to provide practice over the course of the year. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture> . Teachers should score students' responses using the scoring guidelines and provide feedback that focuses on what students need to do to improve their scores.

**Question #2****Task:** Interpersonal Writing — E-mail Response**Max. Points:** 6**Total Group Mean Score:** 4.80**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.53***What were responses expected to demonstrate in their response to this question?***

This task assessed writing ability in the interpersonal mode of communication by requiring students to write a response to an e-mail received from a friend. In the 15 minutes allotted for this task students must be able to comprehend the e-mail and then write a response that addresses all the questions posed in the e-mail. Students were expected to demonstrate skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, comparing, and evaluating in order to derive meaning and to respond based on the specified situation and cultural context. They should also demonstrate the ability to use language in a culturally appropriate manner.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

The mean score for the Standard Group was 3.53 out of a possible 6 points, higher than last year's mean score of 3.20. The mean score for the Total Group was 4.80, higher than last year's mean score of 4.26.

- Students performed well in terms of answering the question in a culturally appropriate manner and they consistently used register appropriate to the situation in their responses.
- Compared to last year, there was an improvement in student performance in terms of task completion. However, responses that only addressed one aspect of the question and ignored the other were still not uncommon.
- Some factors that affected students' comprehension of the question:
  1. The punctuation mark (、) in Chinese, used to set off items in a series, was unfamiliar to some students, causing difficulty in their comprehension of the question and affected their ability to complete the task.
  2. Some students had difficulty with unfamiliar vocabulary, such as 欢迎活动, and their responses were either inconsistent with the question or addressed the question only marginally.
  3. Some students' responses reflected confusion about time duration (e.g. 两天) and point in time (e.g. 开学前两天).
- Weaknesses in linguistic control were seen in several areas:
  1. Frequent typos due to mispronunciation or mistakes in character selection.
  2. Inconsistent use of transitional elements and cohesive devices.
  3. Errors caused by insufficient vocabulary, and fragmented sentences that significantly obscured meaning.

***What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?***

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
你好国华, 我干收到你的邮件. 我觉得你们可以打广告和邀请老师来和你们一起打广告. 要是我的话我会开始的 qianyitai	国华你好, 我觉得你可以带他们去吃饭, 吃那种一道中国菜, 这样就会省下很多的钱, 我还觉得你们应该 开学前两天半活动, 因为这样不会耽误开学的重要的事情。

如此应不该参与, 我也没得足够钱. 我没	你好! 我觉得你可以带国外来的学生去参观附近的地方。比如, 旧金山。旧金山有很多好吃和好玩的东西你们可以试试看。如果你没有足够的钱, 那你也可以带国外德先生去看旧金山那里的海 和桥, 或去公园走一走。关于那天要办或东, 我觉得开学前一或两天最好因为国外的学生就可以有机会参观这里的环境。而且, 如果你们是开学那天去办活动, 那你们就没有呢么多时间。还有, 怕你们明天上学会太 累。希望这对你有帮助!
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**Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

- Remind students that the AP exam is a performance-based assessment and it is important to address the question *directly* and *fully* – task completion takes first priority.
- Teachers should give students ample opportunities to practice typing Chinese on a computer to reduce errors in Pinyin typing and character selection.
- Teachers should work with students during practice for this task to train them to read the prompt carefully and thoroughly and to make sure that they address all aspects of the question.
- The Chinese punctuation system should be properly incorporated into the curriculum to enhance students' reading and writing ability.
- Teachers should actively teach transitional expressions and cohesive devices so students can make appropriate transitions and connections.
- During instruction, teachers should emphasize how to construct coherent discourse with well-connected sentences.

**What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?**

- Teachers should view the AP World Languages and Cultures Online Module: *Interpersonal Communication: Developing Writing Abilities*, by Nyan-Ping Bi, to gain some strategies to build their students' performance in Interpersonal Writing. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules>
- Teachers should access the scoring guidelines for this task and share them so students will have realistic expectations for performance in this task. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should access one or more of the e-mail prompts from 2007-2017 and their associated student samples of high-, mid- and low-performances and share them so students can gain insight into performance vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should use the remaining e-mail prompts from 2007-2017 to provide practice to students over the course of the year. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>. Teachers should score students' responses using the scoring guidelines and provide feedback that focuses on what students need to do to improve their scores.

**Question #3****Task:** Interpersonal Speaking — Conversation**Max. Points:** 36**Total Group Mean Score:** 26.29**Standard Group Mean Score:** 18.19***What were responses expected to demonstrate in their response to this question?***

This task assessed speaking ability in the interpersonal mode of communication by having students respond to a series of questions in a simulated conversation. The task consisted of a statement identifying an interlocutor and a conversation topic followed by six questions. Students were allotted 20 seconds to speak at each turn in the conversation. Students should demonstrate the ability to interact appropriately, given the specified cultural context, in an unrehearsed, spontaneous fashion, and their responses should reflect integration of a variety of critical thinking skills, such as analyzing, synthesizing, comparing, and evaluating, in the process of negotiating meaning.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

The mean score for the Standard Group was 18.19 out of a possible 36 points, lower than last year's mean score of 20.98. The mean score for the Total Group was 26.29, lower than last year's mean score of 27.11.

- Register used in responses was generally appropriate to the situation.
- A number of factors contributed to students' inability to interact appropriately in the given context, including the following:
  1. For questions comprised of two parts, some responses only addressed one part and therefore did not fully complete the task.
  2. Some students did not correctly assume the role in the scenario; consequently, instead of responding to questions based on the role they were playing, their responses were given from their own personal perspective and were inconsistent with the scenario.
  3. Some students did not understand the questions due to unknown vocabulary items (e.g. 適應) and were therefore unable to address the question directly.
- Responses weak in linguistic control were characterized by insufficient vocabulary, limited grammatical structures, fragmented sentences, frequent hesitation, and inconsistent pace and intonation.

***What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?***

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
住在...中国人家里，因为我要 uh 跟..中国...的...uh 家 uh 文化 uh 可以帮我 uh 跟...朋友 I don't know..	我愿意在中国家庭住，因为我來这儿为了学习習汉语，多了解中国文化，所以我住在中国人家的话，我可以更了解中国文化，而且我可以积累知识。谢谢。
我难适应 uh 因为 uh 我可可以学这个中文在 uh 中国的 uh 政治 uh sh- 我可以学政治的中文	我觉得到了中国以后，最难适应的是语言。因为我们在美国很少有机会说中文。但是到了中国，我们只能说中文，因为很多人都只-只-会说中文。

**Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

- Remind students that the AP exam is a performance-based assessment and it is important to address the question *directly* and *fully* – task completion takes first priority.
- In order to interact appropriately in a given context, students should keep in mind the role they are assuming, so as to respond accordingly.
- Teachers should provide ample opportunities to practice role-playing in a variety of contexts and scenarios in their curriculum planning in order to improve students' performance and comfort in speaking spontaneously. Teachers should prepare students for prompts that require them to complete more than one language function by designing questions for conversation practice that are comprised of two parts, requiring students to complete two language functions in a given turn, such as declining an invitation and stating why, or suggesting an activity to friend and recommending when to do it. This type of practice will help students appropriately handle more than one linguistic task at a time.
- Students should learn different ways to elaborate and add details to enhance the linguistic characteristics of their responses.

**What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?**

- Teachers should view the AP World Languages and Cultures Online Module: *Interpersonal Communication: Developing Speaking Abilities*, by Clarissa Adams-Fletcher, to gain some strategies to build their students' performance in Interpersonal Speaking. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules>
- Teachers should access the scoring guidelines for this task and share them so students will have realistic expectations for performance in this task. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should access one or more Conversations from 2007-2017 and their associated student samples of high-, mid- and low-performances and share them so students can gain insight into student performance vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should use the remaining Conversations from 2007-2017 to provide practice to students over the course of the year. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>. Teachers should score students' responses using the scoring guidelines and provide feedback that focuses on what students need to do to improve their scores.

**Question #4****Task:** Presentational Speaking — Cultural Presentation**Max. Points:** 6**Total Group Mean Score:** 4.02**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.13***What were responses expected to demonstrate in their response to this question?***

This task assessed speaking ability in the presentational mode of communication by requiring students to give an oral presentation on a specific Chinese cultural topic as if they were speaking to their Chinese class. It consisted of a single prompt, which identified the cultural topic and asked students to select an example of that topic, describe it, and explain its significance. Students were allotted 4 minutes to prepare and 2 minutes to deliver their presentation. In addition to linguistic accuracy in forming coherent and cohesive discourse, students should demonstrate cultural appropriateness in describing and analyzing the specified cultural practice, product, or perspective. Responses to this question should demonstrate accurate cultural knowledge.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

The mean score for the Standard Group was 3.13 out of a possible 6 points, higher than last year's mean score of 2.70. The mean score for the Total Group was 4.02, higher than last year's mean score of 3.77.

- Misreading the question was a common error. For example, while the question specifically asked for a description of a non-food related celebratory activity, some students made a presentation on a food item associated with a festival.
- Some students talked about how Chinese people celebrate a festival as a whole, instead of focusing on one specific activity, as required by the question.
- Many responses focused on the description of a celebratory activity, but did not discuss its significance.
- Perhaps focusing too much on the word 'traditional' in the phrase 'traditional celebratory activity' of the question, some students gave examples that were unrelated to celebration, such as practicing Chinese calligraphy.
- Cultural information presented in some of the responses was erroneous, e.g. 端午节是在春节的时候。

***What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?***

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
在中国很多人喜欢写书法，很多中国人的爱好，uh 书法有很长的历史，写书法，你就-就要文具 [wen3zhu1] 比如说毛笔。	大家好，今天我要报告的文化主题是红包。我将从三个方面谈谈，第一，uh 什么时候 [hou2] 送 [seng4]；第二，um 红包的意义；第三，我的看法。首先，um 红包是 um 在中国每一个 uh 节日的时候送。Um 所以，uh 所以大的节日时，新年，但是，长辈给，长辈给小孩子红包，um 他们的生日的时候，和 um 和 um 在中秋节的时候。其次，长辈送红包给小孩子，因为，是好福的，而且，uh 孩子，uh 可以用 um 他们给的钱。Uh, uh 最后，我的看法是，我觉得红包是很好的 um 传统，因为 um 他们会，开，孩子可以买他们想要的东西。...



Uh, 你好, uh 今天我给大家介绍 uh 端午节。端午节是在 uh 春节时候。Um 在-在这个节, uh 人们要拿木柜子, uh 在龙, 在一个假的龙的下面钻来钻去, um 度 [ ? ] 高度 [ ? ] 低, uh 所以 uh 看起来, 龙在跳舞。Um 这个跳舞 um 对小孩子很好玩, 也候 [ 然后? ], 对 um 大人, uh 很一个很好的表演。Uh 中国人对 uh 龙很有名, 因为…um 所以…他们一定要, uh 一定要弄这个 um 节日。Uh 龙的…um…因为 [ long pause and hesitation ], uh 人们非常喜欢这个表演, 所以 uh 每年人会做。	中国有一个非常特别的文化活动, 那就是发红包。红包是在每年中国农历年的初一早上, 长辈会给晚辈的钱, 然后装在红色的信封袋里。这项活动会非常重要是因为它提醒了中国人民最重要的一件事, 那就是尽孝道。在拿红包之前, 晚辈必须说一些祝福的, 祝福长辈的吉祥话。……举例来说, ………长辈给了小孩子红包, 小孩子便会开始培养储蓄的观念, ………因此我认为发红包这件事是非常有趣, 而且很重要的中华文化活动。……
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**Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

- Remind students that the AP exam is a performance-based assessment and it is important to address the question *directly* and *fully* – task completion takes first priority.
- AP teachers should emphasize that students need to spend their 4 minutes of preparation time for this task to plan and organize well-balanced content before giving a presentation.
- Teachers should spend time training and modeling for their students how to appropriately address all aspects of the question. Specifically, students should be reminded of the need to explain the significance of the cultural product, practice, or perspective.
- Students should be exposed to discussions focused on cultural topics on a regular basis. Teachers should devise ways to help students keep track of their cultural learning to be able to easily review before the exam, such as giving students a template to use for notes during cultural discussions or note cards with cultural information that could be kept on a ring for easy review.
- Students should have multiple opportunities to practice this task before the exam and should be expected to routinely share cultural information in class through brief oral presentations.

**What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?**

- Teachers should view the AP World Languages and Cultures Online Module: *Presentational Communication: A Focus on Speaking*, by Angelika Becker, to gain some strategies to build their students' performance in Presentational Speaking. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules>
- Teachers should access the scoring guidelines for this task and share them so students will have realistic expectations for performance in this task. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should access one or more Cultural Presentation prompts from 2007-2017 and their associated student samples of high-, mid- and low-performances and share them -so students can gain insight into student performance vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should use the remaining Cultural Presentation prompts from 2007-2017 to provide practice to students over the course of the year. <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture>. Teachers should score students' responses using the scoring guidelines and provide feedback that focuses on what students need to do to improve their scores.