

Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2018 AP[®] Spanish Literature and Culture Free-Response Questions

• Number of Students Scored	27,451			
• Number of Readers	152			
• Score Distribution		Exam Score	N	%At
		5	2,664	9.7
		4	6,722	24.5
		3	9,910	36.1
		2	5,963	21.7
		1	2,192	8.0
• Global Mean	3.06			

The following comments on the 2018 free-response questions for AP[®] Spanish Literature and Culture were written by the Chief Reader, Dr. Matthew V. Desing, Associate Professor of Spanish at the University of Texas at El Paso. 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.

Question #1**Task:** Text Explanation**Topic:** Identify the author and period of the work, then explain the development of the theme of *la naturaleza y el ambiente* within the work.**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score: Content:** 1.41**Language:** 2.45***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

This question requires students to read a fragment from a short story on the required reading list, and then respond to a prompt in a short response (not a fully-developed essay). On this year’s exam the selection was taken from the short story, “El hijo,” which was written by the Argentinean writer Horacio Quiroga in 1935. Students were asked to identify the author and the period of the text and to explain the development of the theme of *la naturaleza y el ambiente* (“nature and setting”) within the short story (not exclusively the fragment provided on the exam). The question required students to identify the period, “*época*,” with the purpose of situating the text historically, within either a specific date range, a broader period or century, or a literary movement connected to a specific period. Students were asked to explain the development of the theme of *la naturaleza y el ambiente* to show how the author uses nature and atmosphere to signal mood changes, from confidence to anguish, within the father who is the main character of the short story. Students were asked to write their short response in Spanish to demonstrate their proficiency in Presentational Writing in the target language.

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?

A successful response correctly identified the author, the period of the text, and then effectively explained the development of the theme. A superior response placed the story within the correct natural setting, pointing toward the ways in which the natural elements anticipate and later parallel the transformation the father’s emotions undergo as his son fails to return at the appointed time. A successful response explained how the passing of time is marked by the movement of the sun as it reaches its zenith, identifying this moment that the father’s nerves begin to descend into anguish. The most successful responses wove in evidence from throughout the story that provided further insight into the father’s thought process and feelings and the connection between these and the natural and atmospheric elements in the story.

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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect identification of author and period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top score responses correctly identified both the author and the period.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a plot summary of the fragment and, or the entire short story instead of an explanation of the development of the theme of “<i>la naturaleza y el ambiente</i>” (possibly because of not understanding or completely overlooking the word “development” in the prompt). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses that demonstrated an understanding of this aspect identified changes or development in the portrayal of nature that paralleled psychological changes in the main character. • Successful responses distinguished between natural and familial atmosphere (“<i>ambiente</i>”), commenting on the close relationship between the father and son, and the disruption of that relationship when the son fails to return at the appointed time, which foreshadows the short story’s tragic ending. • Successful responses may have also commented on the irony of the fact that the instruments of the father’s attempts to protect his son from nature (the gun and the wire fence) become the means by which the son is ultimately killed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failing to provide textual examples altogether or providing irrelevant textual examples to support contentions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses integrated textual examples in the students’ own words and/or citations from the text to provide evidence of the development of the theme of “<i>la naturaleza y el ambiente</i>”.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacking vocabulary and/or grammatical forms to explain changes or development of a theme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses made accurate use of vocabulary and of connectors, such as “<i>a lo largo del cuento</i>”, “<i>el sol juega un papel clave</i>”, “<i>se puede apreciar que</i>” and others.

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?

- Identifying basic information about works is always required on this free-response question and often on questions on the multiple-choice section of the exam. Many techniques can be used to acquire or review this information, from flashcards to memory work with images. Teachers should encourage their students to review this information periodically throughout the course.
- The term “*desarrollo*” often appears in this free-response question. Teachers should make sure that students know the difference between identifying a theme and explaining its development. The term “development” implies change over time, and students should be attuned to this especially in terms of the organizing theme of “*el tiempo y el espacio*”.
- Locating evidence from the text is an important skill which can be scaffolded. A first stage could be having students choose from among a given list of quotes that best supports a contention or theme provided by the teacher. A following stage could be having the students themselves locate quotations in a text to support a theme given by the teacher. A final stage could be having the student identify a theme on their own, and then choose evidence to support it.

- Key vocabulary and set phrases are essential to being able to write certain types of essays. Teachers and students could brainstorm on constructions needed to fulfill each question type. For this task, and the other free-response tasks, students need a strong repertoire of cohesive devices and transitional expressions that help to guide the reader’s understanding of the response.

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 online module for AP Spanish Literature and Culture that provides strategies to help improve students’ skills in critical reading and analytical writing. This module, *Developing Students’ Abilities in Critical Reading and Literary Analysis*, by Ceida Fernández Figueroa, is presented in Spanish and contains sample exam tasks for classroom practice: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules>
- Teachers should be thoroughly familiar with the expectations for this first free-response question. They can access information about it in the Course and Exam Description, page 39 (<https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>).
- Teachers should access the scoring guidelines on the Exam Information Page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and carefully review them with their students so that students will understand expectations for performance and the evaluative criteria for each score point.
- Teachers should access some of the Student Samples of Free-Response Question #1 from 2013-2018 posted on the Exam Information page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and review them, along with the scoring guidelines, with students. This will help students see how the scoring guidelines are applied and understand the characteristics of high, mid, and low performances.
- Teachers should access the remaining samples of Free Response Question #1 from 2013-2018 that are posted on the Exam Information Page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and use these to practice this question with their students. Before having students practice this task for the first time, teachers should carefully review the instructions, have students read and explain what the task entails, and then require students to check off each of the three components of the task once they have completed each in their response. Teachers should then use the scoring guidelines to score students’ responses and provide feedback to students as to how to improve their work to possibly move it up into the next higher score category.

Question #2

Task: Text and Art Comparison

Topic: Compare the representation of the role of women in “Las medias rojas” by Emilia Pardo Bazán to “By the Window, Portrait of Olga Trubnikova” by Valentin Serov

Max. Points: 3**Mean Score: Content:** 1.67**Language:** 2.57***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

This question requires students to read a text or an excerpt of a text from the reading list and view a piece of artwork. The prompt then instructs students to engage in a thematic comparison of the two works focusing on a genre or literary/artistic movement. The literary selection on this year’s exam was a fragment from Emilia Pardo Bazán’s short story “Las medias rojas,” and the artwork was a reproduction of the painting “By the Window, Portrait of Olga Trubnikova” by Valentin Serov. Students were required to compare the theme of the representation of the role of women (*la representación del papel de la mujer*) in the two works in relation to the literary movement of Realism while supporting their contentions with specific, well-chosen examples from both the literary work and the artwork. This question requires students to respond to the prompt in a well-organized short answer (not an essay) using varied vocabulary and grammatical forms appropriate to the task.

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?

Successful responses effectively compared the theme of the representation of the role of women in both works. In the thematic comparison, appropriate responses often pointed to the domestic work carried out by both Ildara, the protagonist of the short story, and the figure in the painting. These discussions focused on how the two women seem to be confined by their domestic circumstances. The most successful responses were able to point to differences in the presentation of the theme, as well. Responses were able to draw connections to the literary/artistic movement of Realism. The best responses were able to provide well-chosen examples from both works; the oppressive nature of the smoke-filled home in the short story and the expression of boredom or melancholy on the figure portrayed in the painting. Excellent responses were able to draw connections between the possible glimmer of hope represented by the red stockings in the short story and that of the light entering the window and landing on the face of the subject of the painting. Successful responses were able to accomplish these tasks in the form of a short response without extending their writing into a full-fledged essay. Overall, the responses to this question were very successful.

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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect conceptualization of the literary movement Realism (focusing on instead on “reality,” or feminism in general terms without connecting it to a movement). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most successful responses explicitly connected the theme of the literary and artistic works to the literary movement of Realism in its historical/cultural context.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposition instead of comparison (describing the two works without engaging in an explicit comparison). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses that positively or productively responded to this aspect of the prompt engaged in an active and explicit comparison of the two works (instead of treating the two works in isolation).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misconception of the theme “la representación de la mujer.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses engaged in a treatment of the portrayal of women in these two artistic works specifically rather than expounding on the role of women in society in general or in the period of their production (without tying that “reality” to the works indicated).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting the two works referenced on the prompt to others on the reading list at the expense of an effective comparison of these two specific works. Some less effective responses brought in other works, at the expense of the primary comparison. While mentioning other works is not prohibited, the bulk of the comparison should be on the two works targeted in the prompt. 	<p>Successful responses effectively compared the two pieces of art (literary and pictorial).</p>

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?

- Teach students to identify the different parts of the question. What aspects of each piece of literature/art are they supposed to compare? Prepare students to write concise, well-organized responses that address all elements of the prompt.
- Provide templates or graphic organizers, such as Venn diagrams or T-charts, that will help students to make comparisons
- Teach and analyze characteristics of literary movements or genres and consistently reference these when teaching a new text.
- Teach and stress the use of comparative and contrastive conjunctions and transitional phrases.
- Encourage students to use an academic register rather than a colloquial one.
- Teach students to provide relevant evidence to support main ideas.
- Teach students to analyze artworks and compare them thematically with the works on the mandatory reading list.

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 online module for AP Spanish Literature and Culture that provides strategies on improving students’ skills in critical reading and analytical writing. This module, *Developing Students’ Abilities in Critical Reading and Analytical Writing*, is presented in Spanish and contains sample exam tasks for classroom practice: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules>
- Teachers should be aware of the expectations/requirements for this question and should share them with students. A description of this question is found on page 39 in the Course and Exam Description for AP Spanish Literature and Culture: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>
- Teachers should download and distribute to students the *Glossary of Literary Terms for AP Spanish Literature and Culture* available as a PDF here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-spanishliteratureglossaryofliteraryterms.pdf?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>. This resource provides definitions of all the literary terms in the Course and Exam Description and provides examples of each taken from one or more of the works on the required reading list. Regular use of this resource will strengthen students’ understanding of literary terms, movements, techniques and genres.

- Teachers should access the scoring guidelines on the Exam Information Page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and carefully review them with students so that students will understand the expectations for performance and the evaluative criteria for each score point.
- Teachers should access some of the Student Samples of Free Response Question #2 from 2013-2018 posted on the Exam Information page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and review the scoring guidelines with students so that students can see examples of student work and understand the characteristics of high, mid, and low performances. Teachers should share the provided scoring commentaries for each sample after students have reviewed each sample and tried to determine its score based on the scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should access the remaining samples of Free Response Question #2 from 2013-2018 that are posted on the Exam Information Page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and use these to practice this question with students. Before having students practice this task the first time, teachers should carefully review the instructions, have students read and explain what the question entails, and then require students to check off each of the components of the task once they have completed each in their response. Teachers should then use the scoring guidelines to score responses and provide feedback to students so they understand how to improve their work.

Question #3**Task:** Analysis of a Single Text**Topic:** Analyze how “*Los presagios, según los informantes de Sahagún*” represents the characteristics of the sub-genre of oral tradition in the historical context of la América precolonial**Max. Points:** 5**Mean Score: Content:** 2.01**Language:** 2.91**What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?**

This question requires students to read a fragment of a text on the required reading list and to write an essay analyzing how the text represents the characteristics of a particular sub-genre, period, movement, or technique, and its historical context. The text for this year’s exam was a selection from “*Los presagios, según los informantes de Sahagún*,” a text written in Spanish but based on oral testimony given in Nahuatl. Students were required to comment on both the historical context (*la América precolonial*) and the literary devices relevant to the sub-genre (*la tradición oral*), while citing examples from the text that supported their analyses. The students were asked to write their essays in Spanish to demonstrate their proficiency in Presentational Writing skills in the target language in support of literary analysis.

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?

Successful responses covered all four basic elements solicited by the prompt: an analytical essay in Spanish, a treatment of the historical context of the text, a commentary on the literary devices of the sub-genre, and appropriate textual examples to support the analysis. Effective responses were presented in coherent and cohesive essays using an academic register and observing the written conventions of Spanish, while attending to the content solicited by the prompt. The most effective essays expounded on the historical context of pre-colonial America in which the oral testimonies were produced, and some of the highest achieving responses presented the contrast between the oral nature of the original testimony and the subsequent documentation of the testimony in written form. Effective responses attended to how, why, and to what extent the characteristics of the sub-genre of the oral tradition were used in the selected work. The two previously stated aspects of the essay required evidentiary support, and successful responses provided clear and well-chosen textual evidence for both. Question 3 is often considered one of the more challenging of the free-response questions on the exam because of the number of elements that students are required to include, but exemplary responses integrated the four elements in an organized fashion.

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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not discussing aspects of the historical context of <i>la América precolonial</i>, or confusing the historical context with the subsequent periods of conquest or colonization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the prompt asks students to analyze characteristics, successful responses discussed a minimum of two aspects of how the given text represents the historical context of <i>la América precolonial</i>. Such responses were able to differentiate between the pre-colonial period, when the signs or portents were supposed to have occurred, and the subsequent period. When those omens or signs were reported for their redaction in text.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not providing characteristics (literary devices, rhetorical devices, or forms) related to the oral tradition in the essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best responses analyzed the sub-genre of <i>la tradición oral</i> and identified a minimum of two of its characteristics. The best responses also included an analysis of how the characteristics were used or why they were important to the sub-genre.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not addressing both required content areas of the prompt (the historical context and the characteristics of the sub-genre), or failing to balance these two aspects in the essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most successful answers treated the two content areas of the essay in a balanced manner, providing adequate coverage to both the historical context and the characteristics of the sub-genre. Exceptional responses integrated these two areas together.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusing the issue of authorship, perhaps due to the written publication information provided in the exam booklet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses communicated an understanding of the origin of the stimulus: The text was transposed into written form by Miguel León Portilla, but the oral informants were native peoples of central Mexico who spoke Nahuatl.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacking analysis in the essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate responses went beyond mere description of the text, its context, and its formal characteristics, and instead carried out the analysis that was solicited by the prompt. These essays reached beyond explaining “what” was spoken and then written in these narratives, to answer “how” and “why” these narratives were created.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing information that was not germane to the tasks required by the prompt, such as explanations of unrelated course themes or organizing concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While high-achieving essays may have gone beyond the information explicitly required by the prompt, they did so in service of the analysis. Top scoring essays limited their content to either information that was solicited by the prompt or that which supported the essay’s thesis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not providing textual evidence, although analysis may have been present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective responses always provided evidence, either through summary quotations or direct quotations, from the indicated text to support their analyses. Such responses demonstrated that students had read, understood, and interpreted the text and were able to give concrete, specific, well-chosen examples from the fragment in order to analyze how the fragment represented both the sub-genre and the cultural context.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not attending to the characteristics of a well-organized essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More successful responses provided the information in the form of the essay. The best essays organized their content effectively with clear introductions, developing paragraphs, and conclusions. In some, there was evidence of pre-writing in the test booklets, which showed that the students had engaged in preliminary steps to organize and then to present a response that included clear, concise analysis with textual examples.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacking varied vocabulary appropriate to the task of writing an academic essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses included a variety of academic vocabulary applicable both to the sub-genre and to the historical context. The best responses also included academic transitional phrases that reflect ongoing writing as part of classroom activities.
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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?

- Teach students the oral tradition as broader than just the *Romances*, making sure that students don't confuse this with dialogue.
- It would be a good strategy to teach genres and sub-genres alongside historical information so that students understand that these surface in a variety of historical contexts (avoiding the possible idea that, for example, oral composition only happened in the European Middle Ages).
- While studying each text during the year, have students create definitions of the genres and sub-genres of the works on the required reading list using textual examples to explain how the text is representative of the genre or sub-genre.
- Expose students to other texts from the same genre or sub-genre and from the same historic context that are not from the required reading list to compare or contrast how the text is representative of the genre or sub-genre and the period.
- Practice regularly with students on identifying and applying literary devices, not just those used in poetry, and the features associated with different genres and sub-genres that are listed in the curriculum framework (remembering that the list is not exhaustive).
- Teachers might share a variety of terminology for periods surrounding the first contact between Europe and the Americas. It would be helpful for students to have at least a passing knowledge of terminology such as "precolonial" and "*precolombino*," but also terms such as "*la conquista*" and "*la época colonial*."
- Show students relevant films to further familiarize students with the representative genre, period, and/or the cultural context of the work from the required reading list.
- Involve the class in small-group work to create an ongoing historical timeline and a parallel timeline for literary movements.
- Teach students the differences between analyzing, explaining, describing, and identifying.
- Teach the stages of the writing process; pre-writing, drafting, reviewing, revising, and publishing (i.e., blog, literary magazine, book review, etc.).
- Teach strategies for writing analytical essays (thesis, development, conclusion, linking, and transitional words).
- Teach students how to develop and properly support their ideas when analyzing by providing relevant and well-chosen evidence from the text.
- Teachers should help students develop and apply effective cohesive devices and transitional expressions so that they will be able to appropriately connect their thoughts and successfully guide a reader through their essays. They should also help students focus on integrating comments of an analytical nature, as opposed to writing mere summaries or anecdotal commentaries.
- Teach students how to approach answering the question and how to address all of the different components.
- Offer students deconstructed essays to identify the tasks' components and then reconstruct as well-developed analytical essays.
- Take the time to underline, number, or mark each of the required tasks for test-takers so they remember to include each element in their essays.
- Teach students to form a pre-response using a graphic organizer or a mapping strategy to guide their responses before they write. Teach strategies to ensure that students understand and develop responses that addresses all components of the prompt, elaborating on those responses, keeping in mind the objective that would help students achieve higher scores.

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 online module for AP Spanish Literature and Culture that provides strategies on improving students' skills in critical reading and analytical writing. This module, *Developing Students' Abilities in Critical Reading and Analytical Writing* is presented in Spanish and contains sample exam tasks for classroom practice: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules>
- View the AP World Languages and Cultures Online Module *Building Students' Skills in Developing Effective Written Arguments* for guidance on how to help students craft more effective, concise, and organized arguments in presentational writing.
- Teachers should be aware of the expectations/requirements for this question and should share them with students. A description of this question is found on page 39 in the Course and Exam Description for AP Spanish Literature and Culture: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>
- Teachers should download and distribute to students the *Glossary of Literary Terms for AP Spanish Literature and Culture* available as a PDF: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-spanishliteratureglossaryofliteraryterms.pdf?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>. This resource provides definitions of all the literary terms in the Course and Exam Description and provides examples of each one taken from one or more of the works on the required reading list. Regular use of this resource will strengthen students understanding of literary terms, movements, techniques and genres.
- Teachers should access the scoring guidelines on the Exam Information Page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and carefully review them with students so that they understand the expectations for performance and the evaluative criteria for each score point for this task.
- Teachers should access some of the Student Samples of Free Response Question #3 from 2013-2018 posted on the Exam Information page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and review them alongside the scoring guidelines with students so that they can understand the characteristics of high, mid, and low performances. Teachers should share the provided scoring commentaries for each sample after they have reviewed each sample and tried to determine its score based on the scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should access the remaining samples of Free Response Question #3 from 2013-2018 that are posted on the Exam Information Page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and use these to practice this question with their students throughout the year. Before having students practice this task the first time, teachers should carefully review the instructions, have students read and explain what the question entails and then require students to check off each of the elements of the task once they have completed each in their response. Teachers should use the scoring guidelines to score students' responses and provide feedback.

Question #4**Task:** Text Comparison**Topic:** Analyze the effects of literary devices used to develop the theme of *el tiempo y el espacio* in “Salmo XVII” by Francisco de Quevedo compared to those in “Campos de Soria (VI),” by Antonio Machado**Max. Points:** 5**Mean Score: Content:** 2.54**Language:** 3.15***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

Question 4 (Text Comparison) is a question that requires students to read two texts (or fragments of texts) related by theme: one from a work on the required reading list and the other from a work not on the list. Students are asked to analyze the effect of literary devices used by the authors in the texts to develop a particular theme; the analysis should be comparative in nature and should be supported by specific examples from both texts. On the 2018 exam, the two texts were poems: “Salmo XVII” by Francisco de Quevedo, which appears on the required reading list, and “Campos de Soria (VI),” written by Antonio Machado, which is not on the list. Students were asked to analyze the effect of the literary devices used by the poets to develop the theme of time and space (*el tiempo y el espacio*) and to compare the presentation of the theme in the poems. Students were asked to write their essay in the target language of Spanish to demonstrate their proficiency in Presentational Writing.

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?

Essays that demonstrated a strong understanding of both the content and the skills required by the prompt included a strong and clear analysis of the effect of the literary devices used by the authors, and a clear comparison of the presentation of the theme of *el tiempo y el espacio* in the poems. In successful responses, students analyzed the development of the theme in well-developed essays with an explicit statement of purpose (thesis), and a coherent structure that followed a logical progression of ideas. In these essays, students integrated specific, relevant, and well-chosen textual examples of literary devices to support their thematic argument. Students who were prepared for this task performed well.

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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not analyzing the development of the theme of <i>el tiempo y el espacio</i>, although responses mostly did demonstrate a basic understanding of the theme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful responses demonstrated a clear understanding of the theme and analyzed the literary devices to compare the theme of <i>el tiempo y el espacio</i> in both poems to illustrate each poet’s attitude towards the passing of time and its effects on the space that surrounds them.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not mentioning literary devices in comparing the theme in both texts. • Providing a list of literary devices but not analyzing their effect on the development of the theme. • Incorrect identification of literary devices or confusing their nomenclature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong responses effectively integrated the use of literary devices with the development of the theme in “<i>Salmo XVII</i>,” discussing the structure of the poem with its implied gradation, and the use of hyperbaton, metaphor, personification, and poetic voice to analyze the connection between the deterioration of the country and the personal deterioration of the poetic voice. In “<i>Campos de Castilla (VI)</i>,” effective responses analyzed the use of anaphora, metonymy, epithets, tone, and imagery to stress the depiction of the city of Soria as dead, inhabited by the ghosts of the past. Many responses analyzed the idea of <i>memento mori</i> to characterize the spaces in both poems and how they remind the poetic voice in both texts of death.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacking a progression of ideas organized around a central idea or argument clearly stated in a thesis. • Errors of interpretation, including a comparison of both poems around the idea of <i>carpe diem</i> instead of <i>memento mori</i>. • Failing to provide well-chosen textual examples in order to support analysis of literary devices and the development of the theme in both poems. • Focusing on the explanation and description of the historical context and/or literary movements rather than on the analysis of literary devices and comparison of the theme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most insightful responses included a clear thesis that established a thematic comparison highlighting nuances in meaning, such as nostalgia for the glories of the past, the sorrows of aging and old age, or the inevitability of death. Many of these responses also focused on differences in the poems, despite some important similarities, such as the pessimism in “<i>Salmo XVII</i>” versus the more optimistic tone in the last line of “<i>Campos de Castilla (VI)</i>.” Strong responses included a logical progression of ideas in a cohesive essay that integrated well-chosen examples to support the comparative analysis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of description and explanation of the theme rather than analysis. • Merely providing a summary or paraphrase of the poems. • Providing irrelevant commentaries rather than the specific thematic analysis required by the prompt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful responses addressed all elements of the prompt, including analysis (avoiding mere summary). They only included additional information if it supported that analysis.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack grammatical and syntactical structures and/or limited vocabulary restricted the students' ability to provide an effective answer to the question in a well-developed essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful essays guided the reader through the use of transitional words that constantly stressed points of comparison between the two poems, as well as a conclusion that clearly and insightfully summarized the main ideas of the essay. Use of varied vocabulary, good control of grammatical and syntactical structures, and of writing conventions supported the response that addressed the task effectively.
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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?

- Students should be taught to connect the analysis of literary devices to the development of the theme in texts and should be given practice with this throughout the year.
- Students need to focus on the task and to not include information that is not relevant to the task, such as referring to other works.
- Students need to learn to support their analysis of the literary devices and comparison of the theme with well-chosen examples from the texts.
- Teachers should provide opportunities to practice analytical writing and make sure the students know the difference between analyzing, explaining, describing, and identifying.
- Teachers should teach students how to craft an analytical essay with a logical progression of ideas, and that includes an explicit thesis, development of ideas, conclusion, and transitional words.
- Teachers should practice with students the correct nomenclature of literary devices and identify and analyze these using different textual examples; they should also explore the possible function of those same literary devices.
- Teachers should practice with students how to write an essay that successfully addresses the task of the question and provide guidance and feedback.

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 online module for AP Spanish Literature and Culture that provides strategies on improving students' skills in critical reading and analytical writing. This module, *Developing Students' Abilities in Critical Reading and Analytical Writing* is presented in Spanish and contains sample exam tasks for classroom practice: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules>
- View the AP World Languages and Cultures Online Module *Building Students' Skills in Developing Effective Written Arguments* for guidance on how to help students craft more effective, concise, and organized arguments in Presentational Writing.
- Teachers should be fully aware of the expectations/requirements for this question and should share them with students. A description of this question is found on page 39 in the Course and Exam Description for AP Spanish Literature and Culture: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>
- Teachers should download and distribute to students the *Glossary of Literary Terms for AP Spanish Literature and Culture* available as a PDF here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-spanishliteratureglossaryofliteraryterms.pdf?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>. This resource provides definitions of all the literary terms in the course and exam description and provides examples of each one taken from one or more of the works on the required reading list. Regular use of this resource will strengthen students' understanding of literary terms, movements, techniques and genres.
- Teachers should access the scoring guidelines on the exam information page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>)

[and-culture](#)) and carefully review these so that students will understand the expectations for performance and evaluative criteria for each score point.

- Teachers should access some of the Student Samples of Free Response Question #4 from 2013-2018 posted on the Exam Information page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and review them along with the scoring guidelines so that students can see examples of student work and understand the characteristics of high, mid, and low performances. Teachers should share the provided scoring commentaries for each sample with the students after they have reviewed each sample and tried to determine its score based on the scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should access the remaining samples of Free Response Question #4 from 2013-2018 that are posted on the Exam Information Page (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-spanish-literature-and-culture/exam?course=ap-spanish-literature-and-culture>) and use these throughout the year to practice this question with their students. Before having students practice this task the first time, teachers should carefully review the instructions, have students read and explain what the question entails, and then require students to check off each of the elements once they have completed each in their response. Teachers should then use the scoring guidelines to score students' responses and provide feedback to students as to how to improve their work.