

A Description of the



CUNY Proficiency Examination

Information for Students



2003-2004

Office of Assessment
The City University of New York
555 West 57th Street • New York, NY 10019



A Description of the CUNY Proficiency Examination
Information for Students

2003-2004

Contents

Overview	1
University Policy and Frequently Asked Questions	1
Task 1	
Directions and Reading Selections	5
Sample Writing Assignment	12
Scoring Guide	13
Sample Student Essays	14
Task 2	
Sample Assignment	18
Scoring Guide	20
Student Responses	21
Campus Resources	24
Campus CPE Liaisons	26

The CUNY Proficiency Examination

www.cuny.edu/cpe

2003-2004

Overview

In 1997, the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York (CUNY) put in place a policy requiring students in both associate and baccalaureate programs to demonstrate their command of certain vital academic skills by the time they reach the 60th credit. These skills are associated primarily with academic literacy: the ability to understand and think critically about ideas and information presented in print and the ability to write clearly, logically, and correctly. Employers of CUNY graduates consistently stress the importance of strength in these areas. These skills are also vital to success in the junior and senior year in bachelor's programs, as well as in graduate and professional study. The CUNY Proficiency Exam (CPE) requires students to demonstrate their competence in aspects of academic literacy that the CUNY faculty considers important for later success. Specifically, the CPE tests some of the skills that you have developed through the course work that you have taken: reading and interpreting textbooks and material of general interest; organizing and presenting your ideas about what you have read and connecting those ideas to other information or concepts; writing clearly and effectively for an audience; and interpreting and evaluating material presented in charts and graphs.

The Format of the CPE

The exam consists of two tasks for which a total of three hours is allotted:

Task 1: Analytical Reading and Writing (2 hours)

You will be given two reading selections, an 8 to 9 page selection to be studied in advance and a 1 to 1 1/2 page selection at the test. You will be asked to write a focused essay, drawing a relationship between specified elements of the two reading selections and extending it, as directed, to your own experience, understanding, or ideas.

Task 2: Analyzing and Integrating Material from Graphs and Text (1 hour)

At the exam you will be given a set of materials (two charts or graphs and a brief reading passage) on the same or similar topics. These materials are not released prior to the testing session. You will be asked to identify and state accurately the claims in the reading selection and to explain the relationship between these claims and the relevant data in the figures with accuracy, clarity, and completeness.

Who is required to take the CPE?

As of September 1, 2003 all students pursuing an associate or bachelor's degree at CUNY must take and pass the CPE. Passage of the exam is a requirement for the associate degree, while students pursuing a bachelor's degree must pass by the time they have completed their 60th credit. Effective September 1, 2003, these requirements apply to all students pursuing these two degrees, no matter when they first entered CUNY. (Exemptions that previously had been in effect for freshmen who had matriculated at CUNY before Fall 1999 and for transfers who first arrived before Fall 2000 are no longer in force.)

1. Transfer Students from Outside CUNY

No previous attendance at CUNY. All new transfers must take and pass the CPE.

- Students transferring to a senior college who enter with 45 or more credits must take the CPE in their first semester at CUNY and must pass it by their 60th credit.
- Those who enter with 60 or more credits (unless exempted) must take the CPE at the first administration of the exam after they enter.
- Transfers entering with fewer than 45 credits must take the CUNY Basic Skills Tests (unless exempted) before entering and follow placement recommendations. They must pass the CPE by the time they have completed their 60th credit.

Previous attendance at CUNY. All students in this category now must take and pass the CPE, no matter when they first enrolled at CUNY. (Same credit conditions as above.)

2. Students transferring within CUNY

- All students transferring within CUNY must fulfill the CUNY basic skills requirements before transferring.
- Students transferring within CUNY with more than 45 credits should have taken the CPE at least once before transferring.
- Senior colleges may (but are not required to) admit CUNY students to a baccalaureate program if they have completed all requirements for the associate degree except passing the CPE. Like other transfer students, these transfer students must take the exam during the first semester of baccalaureate study and thereafter as required. These transfer students are not eligible for the benefits accorded by the articulation policy of 2000 to associate degree recipients at the senior colleges until they pass the CPE and are awarded the associate degree. Under the articulation policy, students who have completed an associate degree (AA or AS) are able to transfer all of their credits to the senior college.

Exemptions

Students who have earned a bachelor's degree or a higher degree from an accredited program are exempted from CPE requirements.

What are the rules and procedures that apply to taking the CPE?

- You must take the CPE for the first time after you have completed 45 credits. If you are a new transfer student with 45 or more credits, you will take the CPE in your first semester at CUNY.
- You may take the CPE for the first time during the semester in which you register for your 45th credit.
- You must be in good academic standing—students whose GPA is below 2.0 may not take the CPE.
- You must have met the CUNY basic skills requirements in reading and writing in order to qualify to take the CPE.
- You may take the CPE three times and may appeal for a fourth attempt if necessary.

How do I register for the CPE?

You will register for the CPE at your college testing office early in the semester, 2-3 weeks before the test date:

- Colleges will send letters to students who have completed 45 or more credits reminding them to register.
- If you have completed 45 or more credits, you *must* register for and take the CPE even if you do not receive a letter from your college. *You will forfeit one of your chances to take the CPE if you skip a required administration.*

Can the CPE Be Substituted for CUNY-ACT Basic Skills Tests?

Students may no longer meet the CUNY-ACT basic skills tests requirements in reading and writing by passing the CPE.

How should I get ready for the CPE?

The CPE tests skills that you have developed through the course work you have already completed. English composition and writing-intensive courses are good preparation for Task 1, while the skills assessed in Task 2 are addressed primarily in social science, science and mathematics courses. If you have difficulty with writing, arrange to work in the writing or learning center at your college. You can find the location of your college's learning center in the Campus Resources section of this booklet.

Here are some suggestions for preparation well before the day of the test:

- Become familiar with the CPE format, directions, and grading criteria.
- Every college offers support services for students preparing to take the CPE. Attend an information session or take a workshop.
- Sample test questions, annotated student responses, and scoring guidelines are presented later in this booklet. Review this material carefully.
- When you receive the reading selection for Task 1, you will have about two weeks to study it before the test. Read the selection several times and underline, mark up, highlight, or outline the important points in the text as you would if you were studying for a course examination. Use a dictionary to look up words you do not know.

At the time of the test:

- Plan your answers.
- Follow the directions carefully, answering all parts of the question for each task.
- Summarize **only** the parts of the readings called for, not the entire reading.
- Avoid plagiarism by making a clear distinction between your own words and the language of the readings. Identify language or ideas that you take from the readings.
- Explain and support your points fully.
- Keep the reader in mind—focusing your essay, making logical connections between readings (Task 1) or between the reading passage and data (Task 2).
- Reserve time to edit and correct your work.

What should I bring with me to the CPE session?

You **must** bring your copy of the reading selection, but no other papers. In addition, you **must** bring a pen, a #2 pencil, and picture identification. You may bring one dictionary for use during the test; however, no electronic spellers or other devices may be used.

What are the arrangements for students with disabilities?

Accommodations based on disabilities will be granted to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact your college testing office if you require such accommodations.

In rare instances a student with a disability may not reasonably be accommodated within the framework of the test as currently administered. Such students may demonstrate proficiency through an alternative means, to be determined by the academic administration of the college in consultation with the disability coordinator. Students who wish to receive such an accommodation should request it in writing from the appeals committee at least one month in advance of the test administration that the student wishes to attend.

How is the CPE scored?

Task 1 and Task 2 are scored separately by different groups of readers, with the responses to each task being read by two trained readers. If the two readers disagree by more than a minimal amount, the essay is read by a third reader.

Task 1: Analytical Reading and Writing. Four criteria are used to rate each essay:

- Developing an essay that is a focused response to the writing assignment, making appropriate connections among all parts of the assignment;
- Demonstrating understanding of the readings through summary and explanation of relevant material;
- Incorporating, as support for your own thoughts, appropriate references to the readings, identifying the sources formally or informally;
- Communicating clearly and effectively, using appropriate conventions of language (e.g., word choice, grammar, punctuation, spelling).

Task 2: Analyzing and Integrating Material from Graphs and Text. The criteria used to rate your response are:

- identifying and stating the claims in the reading selection accurately; and
- explaining the relationship between these claims and relevant data in the figures with accuracy, clarity, and completeness.

How will I learn my results?

You will receive a letter informing you of your results at the end of the semester in which you take the test.

What happens if I don't pass the CPE the first time I take it?

You may take the CPE three times.

- If you fail the CPE, see a CPE advisor to plan an exam preparation program. You should plan to retest during the next semester. The advisor may recommend one or more of the following activities: tutoring, workshops for students repeating the CPE, writing courses, or writing-intensive courses in a specific discipline.
- If you need a third try, you **must** see a CPE advisor and complete the recommended instruction before retesting.
- Remember: if you do not take the CPE when you are required to do so, you forfeit one chance to take the test.

Who is the CPE Liaison?

Each college has appointed a faculty member to serve as CPE Liaison. The CPE Liaison can assist students who wish to seek a deferral or appeal. At some colleges, the CPE Liaison is available to review your test results with you if you did not pass the test and recommend an appropriate test preparation program. You can find the name of your college's CPE Liaison in the Campus Resources section of this booklet.

What is a deferral?

A student who has failed the CPE for the first time may request permission from the appeals committee to defer taking the next required test. After consulting with the CPE Liaison or Adviser, students seeking a deferral must state in writing to the appeals committee the reason for the request and agree to take the CPE at the next administration. If the committee grants the appeal, the student will be notified of the conditions governing the deferral. For specific information on deferrals, please contact your college's testing office.

How will student appeals be handled?

All appeals must be made in writing to the committee at the college designated for that purpose. You may appeal to get permission to take the CPE early (before you've registered for the 45th credit), or to take the test even though you lack one or more of the pre-requisites. In addition, you may request a deferral, appeal a forfeit, or petition for additional opportunities to test. For specific information on appeals procedures, please contact your college's testing office.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Task 1: Analytical Reading and Writing

Sample Writing Assignment and Student Essays

This task is based on reading selection A, "The Community as Commodity" by Robert Reich, which you were given to read and study in advance and on Reading Selection B, "Engagement and Detachment: Getting Involved" by Philip Slater. The readings are printed below. Read "Engagement and Detachment" and review "The Community as Commodity" in light of the writing assignment, which is printed following Reading Selection B below.

Reading Selection A

The Community as Commodity*

Robert B. Reich

(From *The Future of Success* by Robert Reich, copyright © 2000 by Robert B. Reich. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, a division of Random House, Inc.)

UNCLE BILLY [*emotionally, at breaking point*]: Mary did it, George! Mary did it! She told a few people you were in trouble and they scattered all over town collecting money. They didn't ask any questions—just said: "If George is in trouble—count on me." You never saw anything like it.

—*It's a Wonderful Life*, screenplay, 1946

THE FINAL CONSEQUENCE of the emerging economy for our personal lives concerns the communities we inhabit. Communities used to pick up where families left off. Home schooling gave way to the local public school; the very sick moved from home to the local hospital; libraries and playgrounds provided access to expensive facilities few families could afford on their own. Think of a "community," and you're likely to picture a place where people look after one another—a traditional neighborhood, church, voluntary association, New England town meeting, frontier barn-raising, quilting bee, volunteer fire department, charity supper. The last scene in Frank Capra's 1946 movie *It's a Wonderful Life* typifies the American ideal: just as George (Jimmy Stewart) is about to give up in despair, he finds he can count on his neighbors' generosity and goodness, as they have always counted on his. They're bound together in common cause and friendship.

Contrast this imagery to a more recently heard lament: Americans lack community. We're no longer joiners. We don't know the people next door. We "bowl alone."¹ Since most of us are working harder and selling ourselves with ever-greater gusto, no one should be surprised if we have less energy to spend with our neighbors.

But the view that we're no longer joining with others is not quite correct, and it fails to account for the most important aspect of what's happening. We're still joining together—for child care, elder care, schools, health care, insurance, health clubs, investment clubs, buying clubs, recreational facilities, private security guards, and everything else that's too expensive to purchase alone. But we're not joining as participants; we're joining as consumers. We're pooling our financial resources to get the best deal.

The same advances in communication, transportation, and information technologies that are giving us wider choices of products and investments are giving us wider choices of whom to join and for what purpose. And as with other facets of our new lives, we can abandon the community we choose almost instantly and switch to another in pursuit of an even better deal. Like personal attention, communities are becoming marketable goods. We get what we pay for, and we pay not a penny more than necessary for what we get.

New Groups

Through most of human history, community members didn't have much choice about whom they joined. They were born into their communities and usually died in the same ones. Some notably broke with theirs or were banished, but these partings were rare or traumatic. Even well into the industrial age, most people still congregated within extended families and clans that gave definition to city neighborhoods. Members of these communities stayed put for at least a generation or two.

These communities provided their members some security and care. Yet they often did so at the price of boredom and stifled opportunity. One of history's crowning achievements has been to give people a *choice* of community. An unprecedented share of Americans (and citizens of other modern nations) now enjoy the freedom to escape the communities they were born into. They can choose whom they join with, and then switch to another

group if they wish—another residential community, spa, health plan, child-care center. They can abandon their cyber-communities with a click. As choice replaces random fate, surely community life will be richer, more harmonious, and happier. How could it be otherwise?

For one thing, membership in the older communities extended to many facets of a member's life. There were many different arrangements, of course, but mutual obligations and benefits tended to come in a big bundle: production, defense, care, nourishment, parenting, entertainment, and spirituality. As a participant, you contributed no less to the bundle than was expected of you, and extracted no more than you were expected to take. Clan members produced for the clan and took care of one another's children, sick, or elderly.

By contrast, the new communities offer highly specific benefits. You pick a community for exactly what you want from it. As with other aspects of your new life, you shop for the best community you can afford. Because exit is so easy and the benefits are so targeted, these new communities don't require nearly as much commitment as the old did, nor do they offer the same security to members who might need to depend on one another in a pinch. Sure, you develop friends in a childcare group, but you don't have to reveal as much about yourself along the way, and you can end the friendship instantly, as can they.

Here's the real catch. Given the range of choice and ease of switching, we're sorting ourselves into communities of people with roughly the same incomes, the same abilities, the same risks, and the same needs. Where we live has more to do with how much we earn than ever before. It's Vail and Greenwich versus the communities who attend to them—but on a much larger scale. People who are most buffeted by the new economy—whose incomes have eroded the most, whose earnings are the most precarious—are ending up together in the same poor communities.² Their schools are among the worst. They have less medical attention. Their insurance is more costly. Even when they pool what they can afford, the parents of toddlers still can't raise enough for good-quality day care. This sorting process started years ago, but it's become far more efficient, just when the people who are being sorted away into neglected communities need help the most.

The Sorting Mechanism

To understand what is taking place, you have to understand the sorting mechanism. All other things being equal, someone who buys into a community wants the highest return on his or her investment—the best value, best service, most enjoyable and stimulating peers, largest amount of prestige their money will buy. Those already *in* likewise want the highest return on every new member—people who will contribute as much as if not more than they, and who make minimum demands on the common pool of resources. Unless your motive is charitable, there's no sense joining a community composed of a lot of people who are more costly and needy than you, because you'll end up subsidizing them. And it's irrational for a group to go out of its way to attract members who will be a drain on it, or to provide benefits that will likely attract such people.

When a friend recently landed a job at the University of California at Los Angeles and his wife got a job in a financial firm in downtown Los Angeles, the two of them toured many different communities within a fifty-minute commute for both in order to find a good place to live. After they narrowed their pick of community, they examined a variety of condominiums and cooperatives. They finally settled on the best deal they could afford—within a condominium complex possessing its own security guards, maintenance crew, modest recreation facility, and even broadband Internet connection, in a neighborhood that was safe and attractive and contained a good elementary school for their daughter. In making their decision, they naturally considered the price of the condominium and the monthly fee that went along with it, as well as local taxes. They didn't consciously seek to live in a community containing few poor people whose children would need extra instruction in school and whose overall family needs would require more social services and hence higher local taxes to pay for them. And they didn't intentionally choose a condominium complex whose price would screen out poorer people with larger families that might use up more of the common amenities. They simply tried to find the best deal for their money. They had a lot of information and a wide array of choices (townships with different tax bases, private residential communities with different monthly fees).

The wider the choice and the greater the ease of switching to something better, the more efficient the sorting mechanism becomes. Individuals try to get into groups offering them the best deals—not only the best cities or townships and the best private residential communities they can afford, but also the best universities, primary and secondary schools, child-care centers, nursing homes and elder-care centers, insurance pools, professional partnerships, and companies. And such groups compete to attract the most desirable members—those who can contribute the most and demand the least. As a result, the most desirable end up clustering together, sometimes nationwide, even worldwide. And with ever-greater efficiency, they exclude those who are less valuable or more needy. The next most desirable cluster together as well, and exclude those who are more costly than they. And so on, down the line.

I've made it sound like a cold calculation—colder and more calculating than it usually is—in order to reveal a logic that's just under the surface of society, and likely to become ever more apparent as choices widen and information improves, and it becomes easier to switch to better deals. Few people employ the sorting mechanism consciously. It is, rather, the consequence of a large number of rational personal decisions.

Residential Sorting

Begin with the decision my friend and his wife made about where to live. In a world of wider choices and easier switches, more people like them are making such decisions according to how much they can get for their money, and implicitly choosing not to subsidize people who are likely to contribute less to, or use up a lot more of, common resources. As residential communities have become commodities—marketed, evaluated, and purchased like any other—it's easier for buyers to get just what they want. And sellers have stronger incentives to offer just such deals.

Local services in *private* residential communities—the fastest-growing part of the US. housing market—are supported by membership dues. Such services in exclusive *public* townships, like Vail or Greenwich, are financed by local property taxes. But private or public, the sorting mechanism is essentially the same. Private residential communities exclude large families that need a lot of schools and social services, and whose children may be noisy or engage in petty crime, by charging hefty prices for homes and high membership fees and by strictly limiting the number of bedrooms in each unit. Upscale townships do it by requiring two- to four-acre plots for each home and prohibiting multifamily housing. Despite Vail's labor shortage, its residents don't want low-income housing that might threaten their property values. The only affordable housing that hasn't drawn complaints is situated in an old gravel quarry on a flood plain, forty-five miles away.³

"Citizens' movements" against state and local taxes have been spearheaded by private homeowner associations whose members see no reason why they should pay to support families outside the gates when members are getting everything they need inside, through their dues. In 1990, the New Jersey legislature defused one such revolt by agreeing to reimburse residents of private communities the taxes paid for public trash collection, snow removal, street lighting, and other public amenities because those residents were already paying for them privately. In other words, homeowners would pay only for what they got and no longer subsidize other communities needing more.

Depending on which is the more efficient means of sorting, private residential communities can morph into public townships, and vice versa. On March 24, 1999, the Leisure World retirement village in Orange County transformed itself from a gated community into one of California's newest municipalities: Laguna Woods, whose average citizen is seventy-seven years old. The change allows residents to keep more of their tax dollars for themselves, paying only for the swimming pools, tennis courts, riding stables, and lawn care within the new city's boundaries rather than spending money on schools and social services for children in the rest of the county.

I once described this as the "secession of the successful," but in recent years the sorting mechanism has extended further down the economic ladder. As the proportion of married-with-children households continues to shrink and that of elders rises, more school districts contain larger concentrations of older people who vote for lower taxes and lousy schools rather than the opposite combination. Meanwhile, American cities are creating all manner of "special service" districts for middle-class residents and business owners willing to pay assessments for more trash collection, cleaning, and police—so long as the extra services are performed solely inside the district. Exclusive communities are even becoming exclusively wired. In the not-too-distant future, they'll link all their households, schools, retail stores, and offices to single giant high-speed networks—allowing teachers to communicate more easily with parents, businesses with their employees, and everyone with their town officials.⁴ Gated communities used to be just for the very rich, but now middle-income home buyers want in. In 1970, the nation had more public police officers than private security guards; now it hires three times as many private guards as public ones—in California, four times as many.⁵

The secession of middle- and lower-middle-income families is also leading America back toward racially segregated neighborhoods. The probability that a black student will have white classmates dropped during the 1990s. You can spot the trend in most of the nation's large metropolitan areas. At the start of the nineties, about 10 percent of Chicago's neighborhoods could still be described as integrated (with black families constituting 10 to 50 percent); by the middle of the decade, less than 3 percent.⁶

School Sorting

As the stakes in getting a good education continue to rise, parents more aggressively seek the best education they can afford for their children. And the best deals are where *other* students are at least as intelligent, ambitious, and intellectually stimulating—and less likely to use up the scarce attention of teachers by being troublesome or needing a lot of extra help.

Peer effects among school-age children are significant—a fact that parents of teenagers will hardly find surprising. High-school students are more likely to go to college when more of their classmates are college-bound.⁷ And whatever their level of ability, students do better in groups more able than they, on average, and worse in groups less able, although the process isn't symmetrical. Students of less ability are helped more by being together in classrooms with students of greater ability than the more able are hurt by being combined with the less.⁸ New evidence strongly suggests that such childhood peer effects extend beyond schools to the communities surrounding them. After a random sample of poor inner-city families received housing vouchers that enabled them to move to higher-income suburbs, their children's behavior improved relative to children in families who wanted the vouchers but lost out in the lottery.⁹

Here too, the sorting mechanism is becoming far more efficient. Wealthier and more ambitious parents are choosing highly regarded private schools or good public schools in tony suburban communities where other students are likely to exert a positive influence, troublemakers can be easily extruded, and slower learners are quietly isolated. ("Tuition" for a good public school in a wealthy neighborhood is, in effect, included in the purchase price of an upscale home there, and the corresponding property taxes.) Or they choose publicly funded "charter" schools with more leeway than public schools about whom to admit or expel. In most states, charters have little room explicitly to exclude or expel, but they can craft their offerings in such a way as to deter less desired students, for example by failing to offer services for children with learning disabilities or admitting children only from the surrounding upscale neighborhood. (A recent study of charter schools in Michigan found that most of them excluded students who were especially costly to educate, such as those requiring special-education services; charter schools in many of the most affluent school districts refused to accept applicants from outside the district boundaries.)¹⁰

The same mechanism explains the upsurge of private "parents' foundations" in the wake of court decisions requiring richer school districts to subsidize poorer ones. Rather than pay extra taxes, parents are quietly shifting their support to these charitable enterprises, thereby keeping more of their money in the home district. Already about 12 percent of the more than 14,000 school districts across America are funded in part by such foundations,¹¹ paying for everything from a new school auditorium (Bowie, Maryland) to a high-tech weather station and language-arts program (Newton, Massachusetts).¹² "Parents' foundations," observed the *Wall Street Journal*, "are visible evidence of parents' efforts to reconnect their money to their kids."¹³ And not, it should have been noted, to kids who are needier and more costly.

As a result of all this sorting, poorer children who require a lot of attention from good teachers are increasingly bunched together with other poorer children who also need a lot, within schools that have relatively few resources to begin with.¹⁴ It shouldn't be surprising that parents in poor communities tend to favor school vouchers, because vouchers at least give them a means of separating their children from troublemakers who use up even more of the scarce time and attention of teachers, and who exert the worst influence on their own kids. Schools in a voucher system are freer to expel children who are particularly unruly. Parochial schools have always had that option, which partly explains why poor kids who attend them do better on standardized tests than poor kids in the public schools. The aggressive use of "zero tolerance" codes of school behavior makes the extrusion of troublesome children all the more common. Where do all these children go? They're bunched together at the bottom of the entire educational system in schools that are essentially custodial institutions. If the children are too unruly even for these precincts, they may end up in juvenile detention centers. The sorting mechanism is complete.

No one designed the educational system this way. Well-meaning parents think of their reliance on private schools, good public schools in upscale communities, charter schools, local foundations, or school vouchers as means of obtaining as good an education as they can afford for their kids—not as means of excluding children more costly to educate than their own. But in fact, these individual decisions add up to a large-scale sorting mechanism. And once under way, the mechanism has its own momentum—as is strikingly clear in California, which in the 1960s had been among the heaviest spenders on public education per pupil and had one of the best school systems, yet now spends among the least and has one of the worst. As residents segregated into richer and poorer communities, the poorer schools began to deteriorate. After Proposition 13 placed a cap on local property tax rates in 1978, and a court decision required rough parity in spending across districts, California moved to pool educational funds statewide—transferring tax dollars from rich towns to poor. This lessened the educational payoff to better-off parents of choosing a wealthier town in which to live, so they began sending their children to private schools and withdrawing their support from the public school system. As a result, overall public spending on education dropped, and almost all public schools began to deteriorate.

In the emerging economy, success will depend most on talent, ingenuity, the ability to sell oneself, and connections. The quality of a child's early education and the character of the child's community are centrally important in these respects. Yet with ever-increasing efficiency, the sorting mechanism is separating children according to the communities and the schools their parents can best afford. Individual parents are acting rationally, but what's rational for individuals is not necessarily rational for society as a whole. Nor is it the outcome we might choose as citizens concerned for the future of the nation.

University Sorting

Say you're a bright high-school senior, considering college. Twenty years ago your sights would have been on the best university in your state, perhaps your region. Now you've got far better comparative data about national colleges, starting with *U.S. News's* ratings and a flood of information over the Internet. Besides, your state university may no longer offer the cheapest deal. State support for higher education is no longer as generous as it used to be (we'll come to the reason later).

This shift toward a national (and in many respects a global) market in higher education has put all colleges and universities into more direct competition with one another. In order to maintain or enhance their reputations, they've got to attract the smartest young people from around the nation, even the world. They, too, have more and better

information about high-school stars. And as competition for these stars intensifies, colleges are offering them more lucrative scholarships.

Parents of the stars are wising up and conducting bidding wars similar to those conducted by prized employees. Carnegie-Mellon University explicitly encourages star applicants to bring back offers from other colleges so that it can match or surpass them. We'll beat any price! Harvard makes the same offer more delicately, as is Harvard's wont: "We expect that some of our students will have particularly attractive offers from the institutions with new aid programs," it writes its new admits, "and those students should not assume that we will not respond."

But as a result, there's less scholarship aid left over for needier students. "Need-blind admissions"—by which universities admitted applicants according to merit, and made sure that anyone who got through the door received enough financial help to stay—is fast disappearing. More of the scholarship aid is now going to the best and brightest. "It used to be, providing aid was a charitable operation," says Michael S. McPherson, president of Macalester College in St. Paul. "Now, it's an investment, like brand management."¹⁵

This means that students who are especially talented, well organized, and motivated are clustering more than ever together in the same prestigious universities. Their chances of doing well in life are already high before entering college. The clustering further bolsters their prospects of success. Not only are their talents and ambitions mutually reinforcing, but their wealth of contacts and connections provide the whole group with access to even better job opportunities. And as they cluster together, the prestige of their university brand grows steadily higher. Young people who are somewhat less disciplined, motivated, or capable of doing well on standardized exams attend "second-tier" universities, and their experience reinforces those almost-but-not-quite-good-enough inclinations and connections. And so on down the line. (However, university rankings don't perfectly correlate with the talent found in any given institution of higher education. And some of the best small universities are establishing reputations for excellence in particular niches, to which world-class faculty and students are attracted.)

The trend has been gathering momentum for several years. What's new is the efficiency of the sorting mechanism. Fiercer competition on both sides—prospective students seeking admission to the best universities, and the universities seeking out the best students—is resulting in an ever-greater concentration of talents and abilities. This helps explain why inequality of earnings is rising even among college graduates.¹⁶

Risk Sorting

One traditional function of a community was to spread the risk of misfortune among its members. All contributed against the possibility that any single one might be in particular need. By the early decades of the twentieth century, it was assumed that nations as a whole should provide all their people with social insurance. Every American citizen would "receive old-age benefits direct from the insurance system to which he will belong all his life," said Franklin D. Roosevelt of the system he was signing into law. "If he is out of work, he gets a benefit. If he is sick or crippled, he gets a benefit."¹⁷

But the sorting mechanism is eroding social insurance. To understand why, you need to understand two basic things about your incentive to insure yourself and your family: First, the reason you buy insurance—either privately, from an insurance company, or publicly, through tax payments to the government—is that you don't know whether or how much you'll be needing it. If you knew, it wouldn't be insurance; it would simply be the specific cost of whatever you anticipated needing, like a new car every five years. Second, the amount you actually pay to be insured—your premium or your tax payment to cover the cost of the insurance—corresponds to the average riskiness of everyone within the group to be insured. As long as every group reflects roughly the same mix of more or less risky individuals, or the group is a national risk pool like Medicare or Social Security, the cost to you is about the same. You can't get a better deal, so you have no incentive to shop for one. Inevitably, then, people on whom fortune smiles end up subsidizing the people on whom fortune scowls. To the extent that fate is random, this seems only fair.

Absent strong social bonds, your incentive to contribute to an insurance pool will erode if you believe the likelihood that you'll need to draw from it is significantly less than the likelihood someone else will. "Welfare," as originally conceived in FDR's plan of social insurance, was for mothers whose income-producing husbands had died. As such it was popular, because the misfortune could happen to almost any family. But when welfare began to be seen as income support for unmarried mothers, a large portion of whom were black, the program no longer seemed like insurance. It looked more like a handout to the "undeserving" poor—who appeared even less deserving as more married mothers of young children had to get jobs. Political support for welfare dried up, and welfare shriveled.

Broad-based social insurance programs remain popular with the elderly (witness the quadrennial political grandstanding about Medicare and Social Security), but the wealthier and healthier are having second thoughts. Many are beginning to see that they can get a better deal by joining together and leaving the poorer and sicker behind.

Selfishness isn't the new force at work here. It's technology, which is revealing more about one's riskiness. For example, the genetic codes carried within your cells can reveal the odds that you'll develop any number of life-

threatening diseases. Your family history—how long your parents and grandparents lived, and what they died of—reveals more information. And the way you live your life—the kind and amounts of food you ingest, how active you are, where you live, your income, your education, your personal habits and addictions—can be analyzed to provide still more specific information on the odds that you'll get sick, have an accident, or otherwise invite misfortune. In short, it's no longer the case that you and the community that insures you are in the dark about your chances of needing to be bailed out. The odds can be known with increasing precision.

The sorting mechanism for insurance operates exactly as it does with social services and education: The best deal is one where your dollars don't subsidize anyone riskier than you. Americans spend tens of billions of dollars a year insuring their health and their lives in the private insurance market. Insurers who compete for this business have every incentive to "cherry pick," pursuing people with lower risks and charging them lower premiums. As more and better information becomes available, such people—who tend to eat better, get better medical treatment, have higher incomes and better educations—will be charged progressively less; people with higher risks—the converse in every respect—will pay more, and the gap in price will widen.

The sorting mechanism is already slicing up private health insurance. Health maintenance organizations (HMOs) actively market themselves in wealthier suburbs and to high-paying companies whose employees are also less likely to need a lot of costly medical care. Employers, meanwhile, are narrowing or dropping coverage of their lower-paid and more risky employees even as they enhance coverage for their most valuable.

Reprise: The Sorted Community

As a result of these maneuvers, the burden of paying for the things that the less fortunate members of every society most need is being shifted more squarely onto them. This is the ultimate consequence of the sorting mechanism.

People with the greatest bargaining power—able to strike the best deals for schools, universities, child care, health care, insurance, taxes, returns on investments—are already the best off. They're likely to be well educated (or have well-educated parents), healthy, wealthy, and economically secure. Those with the least bargaining power—on whom the burdens of economic change are falling the heaviest—must settle for the poorest schools, little or no access to universities, minimal or no child care, poor or no health care, and no insurance against the vagaries of the market. And as they become more socially isolated, they also lose connection to a wider economy that depends ever more on connections. The bargaining power of everyone between these extremes is also inversely related to their need.

No one designed the system this way, nor intended this result. It's the product of a large number of separate decisions by individuals seeking to do the best for themselves and their loved ones. It doesn't suggest that people who are wealthier and more fortunate have become less charitable toward people who have less. The better off may sincerely want to help those who are falling behind. Many contribute to a host of worthy causes. They may in fact disapprove of the sorting that's occurring, to the extent they are aware of it. But the sorting itself may reduce their awareness of how others live who are less fortunate than they. And even if they are fully aware, the sorting mechanism has raised the stakes. For them to act on their own to join a poorer community would require them to sacrifice comfortable neighborhoods, good schools, access to excellent universities, high-quality health care and child care, valuable connections, and all the rest of the benefits that come from belonging to the more exclusive community. A decent society should not have to rely on saintliness.

The sorting mechanism further increases the pressure to earn as high an income as is possible. High incomes buy you and your family memberships in excellent communities. Low incomes force you to reside in poor communities with inadequate schools, few parks or playgrounds, unsafe streets, and a host of social problems. As the sorting mechanism becomes more efficient, the benefits of membership in a desirable community and the costs of having to settle in an undesirable one diverge more sharply, further raising the stakes.

This is not the end of our story. We are not slaves to present trends, nor captives of the sorting mechanism. We can, if we want, assert that our mutual obligations as citizens extend beyond our economic usefulness to one another, and reorganize ourselves accordingly. In this, as in other aspects of the new economy, we have choices.

Notes

¹ For evidence that Americans are joining up less, see Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2000).

² For evidence that Americans are segregating more by income, see Paul Jargowsky, *Poverty and Place: Ghettos, Barrios, and the American City* (New York: Russell Sage, 1997).

³ James Brooke, "Cry of Wealthy in Vail: Not in Our Playground!" *New York Times*, November 5, 1998, p. A18.

⁴ For one example of this already occurring, see Laurie Flynn, "Georgia City Putting Entire Community Online," *New York Times*, March 17, 2000, p. C4.

⁵ "Policing for Profit: Welcome to the New World of Private Security," *The Economist*, April 19, 1997, pp. 21-4.

⁶ On the situation in Chicago, see Bill Dedman, "For Black Home Buyers, a Boomerang," *New York Times*, February 13, 1999, p. A15.

- ⁷ Xianglei Chen, "Students' Peer Groups in High School: The Pattern and Relationship to Education Outcomes," U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Educational Statistics, 1997, 1998. On economic mobility as it relates to education, see George J. Orjas, "Intellectual Capital and Intergenerational Mobility," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (1992), vol. 1, p. 107.
- ⁸ D.J. Robertson and J.S.V. Symons, "Do Peer Groups Matter?" Centre for Economic Performance, London School of Economics, Discussion Paper, 1996.
- ⁹ L. Katz, J. King, and J. Liebman, "Moving Opportunity in Boston: Early Impacts of a Housing Mobility Program," Harvard University, September 1999.
- ¹⁰ Cited in Tamar Lewin, "In Michigan, School Choice Weeds Out Costlier Students," *New York Times*, October 26, 1999, p. A14.
- ¹¹ Data on school districts funded in part by private foundations are available from U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Educational Statistics.
- ¹² "Highlights," Newton Schools Foundation, vol.13, no. 1 (Fall 1999).
- ¹³ Editorial page, August 24, 1998, p. A12.
- ¹⁴ Despite efforts by many states to better equalize school funding, differences still exist. Public school expenditures per pupil (in 1996 constant dollars) in school year 1992-1993 (the most recent date for which such data are available) for districts in which median household income was less than \$20,000 was \$4,237; in districts where the median household income was \$35,000 or more, it was \$6,661; among the wealthiest school districts, expenditure per pupil ranges up to \$9,500. See U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Public Education Financial Survey," yearly issues. See also U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education* (1997).
- ¹⁵ Quoted in Michael Janofsky, "Financial Aid Bargaining Drives Admissions Frenzy," *New York Times*, April 5, 1999, p. A12.
- ¹⁶ Caroline Hoxby and B. Terry, "Explaining Rising Income and Wage Inequality Among the College-Educated" (Cambridge, Mass.: National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper Series, No. 6873, 1999).
- ¹⁷ Quoted in Frances Perkins, *The Roosevelt I Knew* (New York: Viking, 1946), pp. 282-3.

Reading Selection B

Engagement and Detachment: Getting Involved*

Philip Slater

(From *The Pursuit of Loneliness* by Philip Slater. Copyright © 1970, 1976 by Philip Slater.
Reprinted with permission of Beacon Press, Boston)

People in the United States have a compulsive tendency to avoid confronting chronic social problems. This tendency often comes as a surprise to foreigners, who think of Americans as pragmatic and down-to-earth. But trying to solve a long-range social problem with a short-run solution—a down-to-earth result, surely—can hardly be considered practical when it aggravates the problem, as it almost always does. American pragmatism is deeply irrational in this respect, and in our hearts we've always known it. One of the favorite themes of American cartoonists is the man who paints himself into a corner, saws off the limb he's sitting on, or runs out of space on the sign he's printing. The scientist of horror films, whose experiments lead to disastrously unforeseen consequences, is a more nervous version of this same awareness that the most future-oriented nation in the world shows a deep incapacity to plan ahead. We are, as a people, perturbed by our inability to anticipate the consequences of our acts, but we still wait optimistically for some magic telegram, informing us that the tangled skein of misery and self-deception into which we have woven ourselves has vanished in the night. Each month popular magazines regale their readers with such telegrams: announcing that our transportation crisis will be solved by a bigger plane or a wider road, poverty with a law, urban violence with a new weapon, racism with a goodwill gesture. Foreigners are surprised when Americans exhibit this kind of naïveté and/or cynicism about social problems—they don't realize that no matter what realism we may display in technical areas, our approach to social issues inevitably falls back on a cinematic tradition in which social problems are resolved by a gesture.

When a social problem persists (as they always do), those who call attention to its continued presence are accused of "going too far" and "causing the pendulum to swing the other way." We can make war on poverty but shrink from the extensive changes required to end it. Once a law is passed, a top commission set up, a study made, a report written, the problem is expected to have been "wiped out" or "mopped up." The terminological similarity between military actions abroad and "crash programs" at home reveals a psychological one. Our approach to transportation problems has had the effect of making it easier and easier to travel to more and more places that have become less and less worth driving to. Asking us to consider the manifold consequences of chopping down a forest, draining a swamp, spraying a field with poison, making it easier to drive into an already crowded city, or selling deadly weapons to everyone who wants them arouses in us the same impatience as a chess problem would in a hyperactive six-year-old.

The avoiding tendency lies at the very root of American character. This nation was settled and continually repopulated by people who were not personally successful in confronting the social conditions in their mother country, but fled in the hope of a better life. By a kind of natural selection, America was disproportionately populated with a certain kind of person.

In the past we've always stressed the positive side of this selection, implying that America thereby found itself blessed with an unusual number of energetic, mobile, ambitious, daring, and optimistic persons. Now there's no reason to deny that there were differences between those who chose to come and those who chose to stay, nor that these differences must have reproduced themselves in social institutions. But very little attention has been paid to the negative side of the selection. If we gained the energetic and daring, we also gained the lion's share of the rootless, the unscrupulous, those who valued money over relationships, and those who put self-aggrandizement ahead of love and loyalty. And most of all, we gained an undue proportion of persons who, when faced with a difficult situation, tended to chuck the whole thing and flee to a new environment. Escaping, evading, and avoiding are responses which lie at the base of much that is peculiarly American—the suburb, the automobile, the self-service store, and so on.

These responses also contribute to the appalling discrepancy between our wealth and our treatment of those who cannot adequately care for themselves. In a cooperative, stable society, aged, infirm, or psychotic persons can be absorbed by the local community, which knows and understands them. They present a familiar difficulty that can be confronted daily and directly. This situation cannot be reproduced in our society today—the same burden must be carried by a small, isolated, mobile family unit that is not really equipped for it.

But if we are forced to incarcerate those who can't function independently in our society, we ought at least to know what we're doing when we do it. The institutions we provide for those who cannot care for themselves are human garbage heaps—they both result from and reinforce our tendency to avoid confronting social and interpersonal problems. They make life "easier" for the rest of society, just like the automobile. And just as we find ourselves devising ridiculous exercises to counteract the harmful effects of our dependence upon the automobile, so the "ease" of our social technology makes us bored, flabby, and insensitive, and our lives empty and mechanical.

Sample Writing Assignment

With these reading selections by Robert Reich and Philip Slater in mind, write an essay in which you discuss the separation of communities in modern society. In your essay, summarize what Reich says about the ways our communities sort us into different social or economic groups. Draw a relationship between Reich's thinking and what you have just read in "Engagement and Detachment: Getting Involved" by Philip Slater about how and why Americans avoid confronting chronic social problems. In light of the reading selections, discuss your own knowledge or observations about competition and cooperation in our society. Also discuss the degree to which your perspective or experience reflects the ideas of either or both writers.

CUNY Proficiency Examination Task 1 Scoring Guide

<p>A. Develops an essay that presents a focused response to the writing assignment, making appropriate and coherent connections among all parts of the assignment.</p> <p>6 Addresses the writing assignment fully, analytically, and perhaps critically or imaginatively, with superior focus and coherence.</p> <p>5 Addresses the writing assignment fully and analytically, with strong focus and coherence.</p> <p>4 Addresses all parts of the writing assignment with adequate focus and coherence throughout.</p> <p>3 Addresses all or most parts of the writing assignment adequately, but focus may lapse briefly or connections may be missing.</p> <p>2 Addresses some parts of the writing assignment or addresses all parts superficially; focus or coherence may break down at several points.</p> <p>1 Shows little or no ability to address the writing assignment; may not link thoughts between paragraphs.</p>	<p>B. Demonstrates understanding of the readings through summary and explanation of relevant material.</p> <p>6 Demonstrates superior and perhaps critical understanding of readings through accurate summary, full explanation, and insightful analysis of relevant sections.</p> <p>5 Demonstrates strong understanding of readings through accurate summary, with appropriate explanation and analysis of relevant sections.</p> <p>4 Demonstrates overall understanding of readings through appropriate summary and explanation, with some analysis.</p> <p>3 Demonstrates generally accurate understanding of readings although summary or explanation may be incomplete or not fully relevant.</p> <p>2 Demonstrates partial understanding of the readings through summary or explanation, but understanding is flawed or explanation is incomplete.</p> <p>1 Demonstrates little or no understanding of text.</p>	<p>C. Incorporates, as support for own thoughts, references to the readings, identifying the sources formally or informally.</p> <p>6 Makes insightful connections and distinctions between readings and own ideas; integrates references smoothly into own essay and identifies them consistently and correctly.</p> <p>5 Makes analytical connections and perhaps distinctions between readings and own ideas; integrates references into own essay and identifies them consistently and correctly.</p> <p>4 Makes and explains appropriate connections between readings and own ideas; identifies references consistently and correctly.</p> <p>3 Makes some connections between readings and own ideas but they may not all be appropriate or adequately explained; identifies most references consistently and correctly.</p> <p>2 Makes few or unwarranted connections between readings and own ideas; may identify references inconsistently or incorrectly.</p> <p>1 Makes no reference to background reading or makes no distinctions between background reading and own ideas.</p>	<p>D. Communicates clearly and effectively, using appropriate conventions of language (e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation)</p> <p>6 Communicates with precision and enhanced expression through highly effective use of vocabulary and sentence variety; infrequent, if any, lapses in use of conventions.</p> <p>5 Communicates effectively throughout the essay, with few lapses in use of conventions.</p> <p>4 Communicates clearly throughout the essay; sentences may contain some lapses in use of conventions, but these rarely impede comprehension.</p> <p>3 Generally communicates clearly throughout the essay although lapses in use of conventions may at times impede comprehension or prove distracting.</p> <p>2 Communicates clearly at times, showing some ability to use conventions, but whole sections are unclear or errors frequently impede comprehension.</p> <p>1 Communicates little because few sentences demonstrate appropriate use of conventions.</p>

Sample Student Essays

The essays on the following pages, written by CUNY students who took the CPE in Fall 2001, are printed with permission. Their purpose is to present a sampling of student essays that demonstrate the various levels of writing proficiency. The six essays are printed in descending order of excellence.

Essay A

United States of America. From the crowded streets of the Middle East to the small villages in Siberia, these words conjure an image of a super power, rivaled by none. To the world, we are one, but much like everything else, this view changes from a different perspective. To an average American, their country is divided into various groups, be it economically, socially, or for any other reason. According to Robert B. Reich, any modern society undergoes sorting processes, leading to separation of the once traditional communities. Such phenomena, in turn, lead to numerous social ills which can easily be observed in our 21st century society. Phillip Slater notes that some of these ills stem from our inability as Americans to face the social problems and find a way to effectively deal with them in the long term. What are these sorting processes ripping our nation, and are we really so bad at dealing with them?

Sorting, according to Reich, is not something intentionally evil, done to separate the community. Instead, it is a result of people wanting the best for themselves and their loved ones. Each segment of modern society has its own version of this sorting mechanism. In terms of housing, for example, all people want to live in the best place their money can buy. If a person is wealthy, they will want to live with other wealthy people. They have common interests, their neighbors won't rob them, there will be a school with high budget in that neighborhood, and so on. Not only that, but these people wouldn't want poor residents moving in for the same practical reasons. Over time, this creates a rich neighborhood and the poor slums. In terms of education, bright people want to go to the best school, to get the best education. Such a school wouldn't be too happy about accepting a student with lower abilities, in turn creating a group of highly educated people and those with very little knowledge. Even in the insurance business, rich people with low risks don't want to pay large premiums for something they will never collect. So they form their own groups, which leads to poor people with high risks having to pay a larger insurance because everyone else in their group is also very high risk. In all these cases, it can readily be seen that sorting is the direct result of looking out for yourself and your loved ones, rather than some malicious intent. This agrees in a way with what Slater is saying, namely that Americans, generally do not look ahead to the consequences of their actions in the long term. To fight poverty, for instance, we would rather create a committee and sign a law than analyze our actions and see that they eventually lead to the separation of the rich and the poor into distinct residential areas, adding to the poor's already substantial woes. On top of that, while the traditional community, forged by thousands of years of experience, was equipped to deal with certain problems, the modern nuclear family, according to Slater, is clearly not. As an example, he cites our tendency to put people into penal institutions, i.e. prisons, mental hospitals. In a traditional society, a lot of these so called miscreants would be taken care of by the extended community. Today, a single mother working two jobs obviously cannot handle a mentally deviant son as effectively.

These are just some of the specific examples that support both the authors' theories. There are many more. One that particularly strikes me as being very significant is the potential future of human cloning and its possible effects on separation of the community. To elaborate, much like parents wish the best schools and playgrounds for their children, so do they also wish the best genes. So far, this has been no more than wishing, but with the power genetic science is certain to bring about, will those parents do something about it? In this case, those who can afford such procedures would be the rich. This might lead to a group of wealthy children imbued with superior genetic composition and a group of poor children without any of this. Certainly something to think about.

Slater's ideas also seem to ring very true to a certain extent. After all, America is the land of the "quick buck" and the "get rich quick schemes." Our patience is very lacking and to see through deep social changes requires lots of it. Personally, I am as guilty as the next person of looking the other way. For instance, some of the clothes I buy are made in sweatshops in third countries by small children working for next to nothing. Like others, I know about this, and like others, I know that perhaps I am capable of certain actions such as boycotting the company, which could bring about social change. However, and unfortunately, also like most others, I shrug and think along the lines of, what can a single person do, and continue on. This refusal to deal with the consequences of our actions is exactly what Slater is talking about.

In conclusion, in modern societies, particularly the United States, the traditional community is being separated into economic and social groupings through the process of sorting. There is no malintent to this phenomenon, it is simply the result of human self-preservation. However, its effects, coupled with the American tendency to avoid dealing with long term problems, lead to various social ills, problems that will not go away.

Comments on Essay A: Score = 6

A perceptive analysis of the reading selections and a unified, tightly-organized structure make this a strong essay. The writer focuses on America's social problems from the start and weaves together a discussion of both author's views, while integrating an effective critical perspective throughout, including a thoughtful reflection on appropriately chosen personal knowledge and observation. The specific references to both texts are well-selected, and the writer's comments on the texts help to maintain the superior coherence of the paper. The writer expresses complex ideas in clear, fluid prose, using varied sentence structure and precise language.

Essay B

In both essays, Robert Reich and Phillip Slater are both trying to convey a similar message; the world has changed tremendously from the past, and so have its people. Reich mainly discusses communities and how they have evolved, and Slater discusses America's inability to solve the problem of the rich getting richer, and the poor getting poorer. I feel that both are really saying that we have to change our way of thinking, in order to solve the problems that we will face in the future.

Reich starts off his essay by quoting the last scene from 'It's a Wonderful Life.' He brings up the point that in the past when someone was in trouble, the community would all pitch in to help out. "If George is in trouble—count on me." People looked after one another in their communities, because their community was like an extended family. In contrast to today, Reich says 'we bowl alone.' He says that we don't really know our neighbors that well, and that communities today are more like a commodity, something that we can purchase, rather than something we participate in like barbecues, and bake sales with our neighbors. Reich feels that if we are unhappy in our community it is simple for us to pick up, and search for another community that we can get the most out of. During the earlier parts of the 20th century, things weren't that simple. Most people were born into one community, and died in that community, regardless of whether or not it was by choice. However, in the latter half of the 20th century, due to modern technology and other changes, the rules became less rigid. People began to choose communities that were able to give them back, as much as they put in. "We get what we pay for, and we pay not a penny more than necessary for what we get."

The problem with people switching communities, in order to get the most out of what they pay for, is that a sorting process starts to emerge. We separate ourselves into, "Communities of people with roughly the same incomes, the same abilities, the same risks, and the same needs." By doing so, we create a huge gap between what is called 'the haves', and 'the have nots'. Those who can afford to give more end up getting a better education, better medical attention, and better quality of living, because they are living in the communities with people like themselves. However, those who can't afford to put in that much to a community, end up being lumped together with people like themselves, leading to a lesser quality of education, healthcare, and the general standard of living. It's really like a domino effect once the sorting begins. Since parents are forced to send their children to schools they can afford, those parents that are poor, get a poor education for the children. Those children are less likely to go to college, and find higher paying jobs with a degree. Those children, who are now adults and are working at low paying jobs choose a community that they can afford. And so, the sorting continues.

Reich goes on to say that no one intended for this to happen but, "It's the product of a large number of separate decisions by individuals seeking to do the best for themselves and their loved ones." He also says that the sorting itself reduces people's awareness of the problem, because they only live around people like themselves. However, Reich feels that, "we are not slaves to present trends." He feels that we can change this process. We have to open our pockets, and our hearts a little more, to help the people that are at a big disadvantage.

Slater's essay, focuses more on America's inability to solve problems that we face today. He feels that, "People in the United States have a compulsive tendency to avoid confronting social problems." Slater feels that America is filled with people who are good at running away from their problems, because most people that live here are people that came from a mother country, that in some way oppressed them. Therefore, when a problem arises that they have difficulty solving, they move somewhere else instead of dealing with the problem itself which is another way of sorting or come up with a quick solution, that doesn't really solve anything. Slater also feels that American people can't "anticipate the consequences" of what they do. He uses the example of poverty. As much as America realizes that there is poverty, there aren't really any major changes taking place to fight it. He says American people will just wait for some magic formula to cure the problem, or print an article about the problem, and then deem the problem as cured. Once again, the gap between the rich and the poor widens and the sorting process continues. Slater, like Reich is trying to tell America, that unless Americans actually do something individually to try and solve the problems that we face today, the problem of society today will continue on indefinitely.

As an American citizen, I see the sorting mechanism, and realize America's naiveté in solving problems. I live in a community where most of the people I know went to private schools, live in houses, and drive cars. However, when I drive out of the community I also see that many people live in apartment buildings, send their kids to public schools, and in general have a much lower standard of living than myself, and my peers. There is no quick and easy solution in solving this problem, yet there is a solution. If we as Americans can come together, and each individually try to help, I think that we can resolve the issue of the rich getting richer, and the poor, poorer. We have to stop the sorting process from continuing, or else there will never be an end to poverty, poor education, and the like.

Comments on Essay B: Score = 5

This upper level paper addresses the writing assignment fully, centering changes in thinking needed to resolve the problems examined in the two texts. The writer demonstrates strong understanding of the texts through accurate summaries of the relevant portions of the texts, with especially well-chosen and acknowledged quotations to support the argument. The writing is effective and generally correct.

Essay C

Robert Reich gives an example of how communities sort people into economic groups, "We're sorting ourselves into communities of people with roughly the same incomes,.... Where we live has more to do with how much we earn than ever before." (p 2) This statement shows that how much money someone makes does separate people from different incomes. What happens is the rich are separated from the poor. By doing so the rich can

afford better health care, day care, school and whatever else they want. Meanwhile those who aren't rich and can afford these things are the ones who need help and aren't getting it. This causes chronic social problems.

Philip Slater says, that Americans avoid confronting chronic social problems is by making institutions for those who can't care for themselves into "human garbage heaps." They make everyone else's life easier. That is what Americans want -- easier. We would rather drive a car than take a train to get somewhere. Slater believes that we have become a society who rates money over relationships, and those who put self-aggrandizement ahead of love and loyalty. An example of this is my friends' grandmother when she got so old that she couldn't walk anyone, his parents put her in a retirement home. They did this because its easier to send someone away rather than help them and care for them.

Loyalty is gone in America as both authors would agree. Reich says, "An unprecedented share of Americans now enjoy the freedom to escape the communities they were born into. They can choose whom they join with, and then switch to another group if they wish." I have seen this many times. Whenever I watch T.V. I see famous people who were born into a poor community and then become rich and move out of their poor community and into a rich community. If this person was loyal they wouldn't of moved out. They would have stayed and help the community out. Slater agrees with my example by the following statement, "we gained an undue proportion of persons who, when faced with a difficult situation, tended to chuck the whole thing and flee to a new environment."

When people who are making a lot of money move out of a community and into another community they make their old community poorer. If enough people do this one community will come a slum while the other an upper class community. What happens now is the people who live in the slum have to send their children to horrible schools, and terrible hospitals. Because the people with the money left the community. While those who left the community and now live in an upper class community send their children to greats schools and hospitals. This is what Reich calls the, "new economy—whose incomes have eroded the most, whose earnings are the most precarious—are ending up together in the same poor communities. Their schools are among the worst...., This sorting process started years ago but its' become far more efficient, just when the people who are being sorted away into neglected communities need help the most." This is the case with New York City and Long Island. Most people who earn large incomes live in Long Island. However they work in New York City. Their money doesn't go into the economy of New York City. That is why New York City schools are suffering while Long Island schools are among the best in the state.

The reason why Americans avoid confronting chronic social problems is easy. We can just get up and get out of the situation. There is no loyalty. Why try to fix something if you can just move away from it and let others deal with it? Americans want things easy, getting up and moving is the easiest thing to do.

Comments on Essay C: Score = 4

This mid-range paper shows a good understanding of the reading selections. The essay covers the key points of the writing assignment, step by step, while integrating personal knowledge and observation in several places. Although there are some writing errors, the ideas are generally clear.

Essay D

The improvement on the technology gives us wider choice and makes our live better. However, it also creates more problems to us. Philip Slater's "Engagement and Detachment" mentions "People in the United States have a compulsive tendency to avoid confronting chronic social problems." As he urges Americans should pay more attention on the social problems as they aggressively to improve their economy.

On "Engagement and Detachment", Philip also points out that American people does not confront the problems as its go along. They always try to escape or avoid. As Philip stresses Americans "fled in the hope of a better life" and puts very little attentions "to the negative side of selections." Because that people in the United States become separate in parts. Rich people and poor people same to have their own society. They are not try to solve the problems and help each other. They just avoid it and move away from the problem. Philip states "the 'ease' of social technology makes us bored, flabby, and insensitive, and our lives empty and mechanical." People's live sames doesn't have value at all.

Such is the idea that ties in Robert Reich's "The Community as Commodity." Robert stresses "Americans lack community" that people are not longer joining together and helping each other. The community is like a market. He states "We're not joining as participants; we're joining as consumers." The relationship between people and people is as buyer and seller. People become coldly to each other. As he mentions rich people search the best to live exclude the poor people. They go to affluent school to try to get always from poor. Why they do that? Because they try to avoid the terribly neighbors and unsafe place. They want to get away from the troublemaker in the school. It's same as Philip mentions on "Engagement and Detachment", those people afraid to confront the social problems.

The only difference between Robert Reich's "The Community as Commodity" and Philip Slater's "Engagement and Detachment" is that Robert has point out the problems and Philip doesn't. In "The Community as Commodity", Robert states the different problems on "The Sorting Mechanism", "Residential Sorting", "School Sorting", "University Sorting", "Risk Sorting", and the "Reprise: The Sorted Community." He states people sorting house makes the rich people and poor people live in separate place. It makes rich people and poor people don't communitate any more. Also by sorting the best school for their children, the richer people had neglected the poor students and those students are not intelligent. University sort for best students. It makes the best & worst student separate. And the worst student lose help.

In connection to Robert Reich's "The Community as Commodity" and Philip Slater's "Engagement and Detachment", they both point out the problems in our society, but they both don't give the ideas how to solve it. In my opinion, the crises is not so improtan; try to solve the problems is the most things that is improtan to everyone. As to helping the worst student getting better, we have SEEK program and tutoring center to help the students. By collecting taxes from richers, we use it to help the poor. We provide more social workers to help the trouble-makers in our society. We are not "mechanical." When the tragdy happen in the Wordtrade, there are people to help. We should try to do better it not to crisyse what's wrong.

Comments on Essay D: Score = 3

Although Essay D does respond to each of the key points in the writing assignment, the connection among the parts of the essay is missing at times. The writer's summary of the Reich text is a little thin, and the essay does not fully explain the relationship between the two texts. This essay is rated a "3" largely for its weaker handling of the two texts and for the unevenness of its sentence writing. The frequent errors are distracting, and occasionally impede comprehension.

Essay E

The seperation of community in society is determined by a person social or economic status. Nowadays, a person can choose the society or community they thought suits their life styles. Community now and then changed drastically because of individualism. People tend to think of their happiness before others.

In the essay, "The Community as Commodity," Robert B. Reich, illustrated that the modern community tends to have a wide variety of choice wherein a person can choose according to their economic status. People who are financially stables tend to have more choices and they tend to think of themselves rather than others and people who are not financially stable have limited choices on "the community" they wanted. Those people whose financially stable doesn't want to help other people.

In connection to Robert B. Reich, "The Community as Commodity," Philip Slater's "Engagement & Detachment: Getting Involved" Slater emphasize that the Americans avoid confronting chronic social problems wherein he is showing that American think of themselves before others.

Comments on Essay E: Score = 2

This mini-essay does not address the complete writing assignment, leaving out the last two points: personal knowledge and observation and an evaluation of the writer's perspective on the ideas of the authors. The essay's treatment of the two texts is very slight and the relationship between the two texts is only hinted at. The writer also has some difficulty distinguishing between the ideas in the texts and the ideas expressed in this essay. The opening paragraph, for example, does not make clear whether these are the writer's ideas or Reich's. In this brief essay, there are few correct sentences.

Essay F

According, to Robert Reich and Philip Slater people are not forced to continue "sorting" for themselves. They can actually decide that onder things are more important like, "On Mutual obligations as citizens extend beyond our economic, and reorganize ourselves accordingly." But if you put all of the above function like the choice the wealthier person have "University Sorting "School Sorting " Residential Sorting". It would not be in their advantage since peopl always looking out for what's in their best interest. By all these technologies invention, people are more likely to seeking for the best, it is easier to move to better place, we will do it. Philip Slater he views people in different country are moving to "America" to seek for a better life. He also suggested that elderly people are not force to be place in other communities, because they " present a familiar difficulty that can be confronted daily and directly". According to both man's where every your in place is in life, eitheir in a poor " community" elderly housing" or a wealthier "community, is a way each individual decides his own fate and "sorting" in the result of those people decisions lumped together. For the weathier he no longer have to worried about helping the poors, if he choose to move to a better community, that can prevent them from all kind of risk in life. However according to Philip he felt that "very little attention has been paid to the negative side of the selection. By leaving behind the poor people on other difficulty, would not solve the problems in society. By avoiding the "burden" we creating and unstable society"

Comments on Essay F: Score = 1

This essay is very difficult to read because the writing is not clear and there are many serious lapses in the use of conventional English. Although the writer mentions both authors, there are no appropriate summaries of the texts, and once we get past the good first sentence, the essay includes serious misunderstandings of the texts.

Task 2

Analyzing and Integrating Information from Text and Graphs (1 Hour)

Sample Assignment and Student Responses

Directions

On the following pages, you will see a brief reading selection and two figures (graphs, tables, charts, maps, or other figures) on the same or a related topic. You should assume that the reading and figures came from different sources and therefore may not be consistent with one another.

Your task is to identify the claims made in the reading selection and to evaluate whether and how relevant data in the figures support and/or contradict these claims. You should discuss at least two claims from the reading and data from both figures. Explain your findings on the lined pages of this test booklet.

Time Allotted

You will have one hour to read the text, examine the figures, and write your response. You may use your dictionary at any time.

How to Prepare Your Response

You should use your time in this way:

- Identify the claims in the reading selection. You may underline or mark on the reading.
- Examine the data in the figures. You may take notes and/or mark on the figures.
- Determine how relevant data in the figures support and/or contradict claims in the reading.
- Plan a response in which you state the claims in the reading and explain the relationship between these claims and relevant data in the figures. You should use the unlined page to plan your response.
- Write your response on the lined pages.
- Re-read your response to ensure that it will be clear to a reader.

How Your Response will be Evaluated

Your response on the lined pages will be graded on your ability to:

- identify and state accurately the claims in the reading selection; and
- explain the relationship between these claims and the relevant data in the figures with accuracy, clarity, and completeness.

You should include at least two claims from the reading and data from both figures. Your response must be specific. Your notes and marks on the reading or figures will NOT be graded. Your work on the unlined page will NOT be graded. Only your work on the lined pages of the booklet will be graded.

Task 2 Sample Student Responses

The responses on the following pages, printed with permission, were written by CUNY students at an earlier CPE administration. The examination question they responded to is reprinted here:

Bicycle Safety

The following report of a research study recently appeared in a monthly sports publication.

As bicycling grows in popularity as a recreational activity and as a means of transportation for adults and children, injuries continue to take a toll on cyclists. Compared to younger riders, middle-aged cyclists, age 35-54 years, are especially at risk of injuries requiring medical attention. Middle-aged cyclists suffer from brain, facial, and neck injuries at nearly twice the rate as riders under age 16.

Many factors may account for the difference in rates of serious injury between the two age groups, including the deterioration of physical abilities among older cyclists and the greater likelihood of adults riding bikes on streets and highways amid traffic. However, while these and other factors are significant, the most important reason for the difference in rates of serious injury is the difference in the practice of helmet usage between older and younger cyclists.

A recent study found that less than half of adult cyclists regularly wear helmets, compared to almost 75% of children under age 16. The study also indicated that older cyclists are much more likely to make conscious choices about whether or not to wear a helmet. Many older cyclists claim they never wear a helmet because they find it too uncomfortable or unattractive, whereas children under 16 report sometimes not wearing a helmet only because they forget or can't find it. Clearly, if rates of serious injury among riders are to be reduced, older cyclists' attitudes toward helmet usage must change.

Figure 1

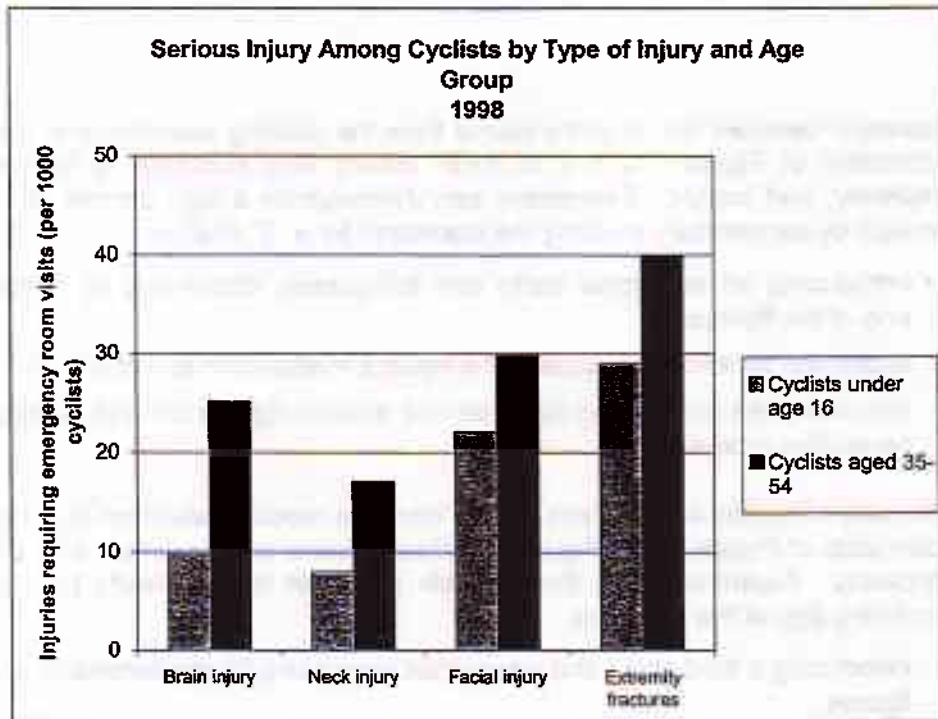
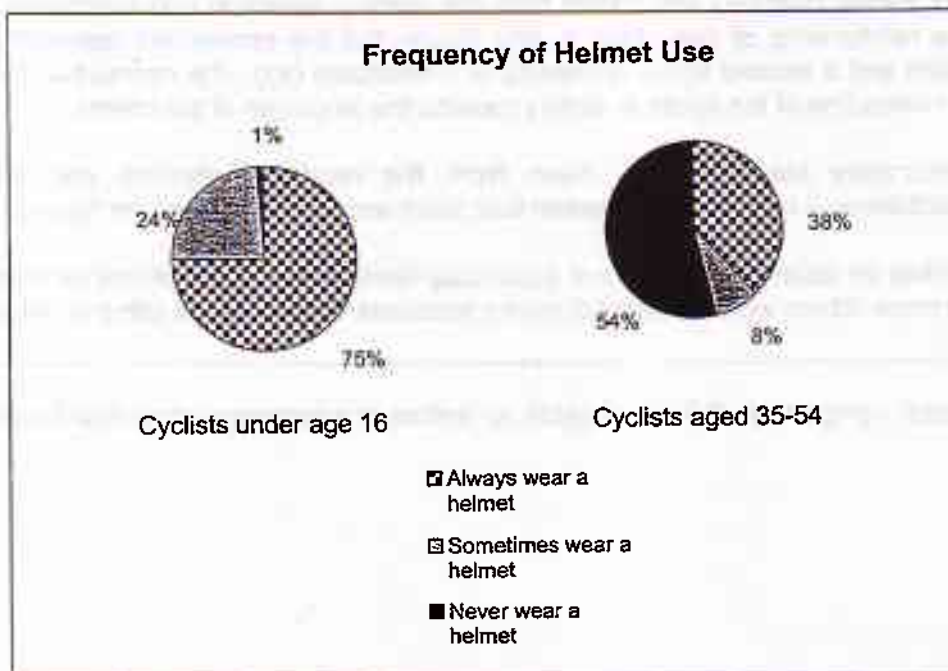


Figure 2



CUNY Proficiency Examination Task 2 Scoring Guide

Score

- 6** Accurately identifies two or more claims from the reading selection and explains the relationship of Figure 1 and 2 to these claims with accuracy, a high degree of complexity, and insight. Examinees can demonstrate a high degree of complexity or insight by successfully meeting the standards for a "5" AND by:
- introducing an additional claim and adequately discussing its relationship to one of the figures; or
 - explaining an additional aspect of a figure's relationship to a claim; or
 - discussing the relationship between one or more figures and the reading using perceptive analysis
- 5** Accurately identifies two or more claims from the reading selection and explains the relationship of Figure 1 and Figure 2 to these claims with accuracy and a degree of complexity. Examinees can demonstrate a degree of complexity by successfully completing one of the following:
- introducing a third claim and adequately discussing its relationship to one of the figures
 - explaining an additional aspect of a figure's relationship to a claim
- 4** Accurately identifies two claims from the reading selection and adequately explains the relationship of Figure 1 to one of these claims and Figure 2 to the other.
- 3** Accurately identifies two claims from the reading selection and adequately explains the relationship of one claim to one figure, but the connection between the other claim and a second figure is missing or inadequate (e.g., the connection is based on a misreading of the figure or simply repeats the language of the claim).
- 2** Accurately identifies one claim from the reading selection and adequately establishes a relationship between that claim and one or both of the figures.
- 1** Makes an attempt but does not accurately identify any of the claims or identifies one or more claims without establishing an adequate connection to either of the figures.
-
- 0** Blank, completely off-topic, illegible, or written in a language other than English.

Task 2 Sample Student Responses

Essay A: example of a very strong response

In the reading selection we are told that middle aged cyclers from the ages of 35-54 are especially at risk of injuries requiring medical attention over young cyclists. Figure one in 1998 agrees that cyclists within that age bracket do in fact suffer more from brain, facial, and neck injuries than their younger counterparts. However, the reading selection says that middle aged cyclists suffer from these injuries nearly twice the rate riders do under the age of 16. Figure 1, in 1998 disagrees with this statement. While brain and neck injuries are almost double, the amount from adults to younger riders, facial injury does not.

The reading selection continues to say that "the most important reason for the difference in rates of serious injury is the difference in the practice of helmet usage between older and younger cyclists." The reading selection found that "less than half of the adult cyclists regularly wear helmets compared to almost 75% of children under age 16." Figure two agrees with this theory by showing two graphs. The graph to the left shows that exactly 75% of 16 year old cyclists do in fact wear helmets. Only one percent does not wear a helmet for the young riders.

In addition the graph to the left shows that 54% of cyclists between the age of 35-54 never wear helmets. I agree with the reading selection that if older cyclists had more helmet usage there would be less injuries. Clearly from figure one and figure two older cyclists have more injuries in the brain, neck, and face than the younger cyclists. Due to figure 2's description of how many older cyclist don't use helmets, I am inclined to agree that older cyclists would have to wear helmets more often to prevent their injuries.

Comments on Essay A

This response represents very successful performance on the task. The writer identifies three claims from the reading selection and explains the relationship of Figures 1 and 2 to these claims with accuracy, a high degree of complexity, and insight.

The writer accomplishes this task by first stating one claim (middle aged cyclers from the ages of 35-54 are especially at risk of injuries...) and establishing a link to Figure 1 ("Figure one in 1998 agrees that cyclists within that age bracket do in fact suffer ..."). Next, the writer establishes a link between a second claim ("The reading selection found that 'less than half of the adult cyclists regularly wear helmets compared to almost 75% of children under age 16'") and Figure 2 ("Figure two agrees with this theory by showing two graphs. The graph to the left shows ..."). And in the last paragraph, the writer extends his analysis of Figures 1 and 2 and finishes his response by linking the data to a third claim ("... if older cyclists had more helmet usage there would be less injuries.") ("Clearly from figure one and figure two older cyclists have more injuries in the brain, neck, and face..."). Furthermore, the overall use of transitions and references, as well as clear language, help to facilitate communication of the writer's ideas.

Essay B: example of a strong response

The reading selection "Bicycle Safety," which is based upon a research study claims that injuries resulting from bicycle accidents are a common occurrence. In addition, the reading also states that the chances of severe injuries are greater to middle-aged riders between the ages of 35-54 than to those riders who are under 16 years of age.

The reading attributes this to several factors, the most important being that the middle age riders do not wear their helmets on a consistent basis leaving them more susceptible to serious injury.

Both graph number one and graph number two support the claims of the reading. Graph number two supports the claim by showing that only 38% of middle-age riders consistently wear a helmet where over 75% of riders under 16 years of age do consistently wear a helmet. Graph number one shows the number and the type of injuries that occur due to bicycle accidents broken down by age group and clearly indicate that injuries occur in a greater frequency to those in the middle-age bracket. In addition, the greatest & most obvious number of injuries that occur more frequently to middle-age riders are those of brain injuries which are more than doubled in the middle-age rider. This can be directly linked to both the claims of the reading and graph number two because brain injuries are generally caused by severe trauma to the head which can be prevented by wearing a helmet, which protects one's head. In addition another supporting piece of data in graph one is that the difference in the number of extremity injuries (injuries to hands, arms & legs) are much lower. This is because these are areas that a helmet does not cover therefore, leading me to believe that there is less of a difference in the number of middle-age & younger riders who have these injuries.

In conclusion, both graphs adequately support the major claim of the reading that many injuries to middle-age bicycle riders can be prevented if they choose to wear a protective helmet.

Comments on Essay B

This response represents a successful performance of the task. The writer identifies two claims and provides additional insight for one of the claims. The first claim is linked to Figure 2 ("Graph number two supports the claim by showing that only 38% of middle-age riders consistently wear a helmet where over 75% of riders under 16 years of age do consistently where a helmet."). The second claim is linked to Figure 1 ("Graph number one shows the number and the type of injuries that occur due to bicycle accidents broken down by age group and clearly indicate that injuries occur in a greater frequency to those in the middle-age bracket."). The writer goes on to discuss a relationship between Figure 2 and the second claim ("In addition, the greatest & most obvious number injuries that occur more frequently to middle-age riders are those of brain injuries which are more than doubled in the middle-age rider. This can be directly linked to both the claims of the reading and graph number two because..."). Although some of the writer's language contains errors and some sentences are not well formed, the meaning is clear. The flow of the response and the connections between ideas are satisfactory.

Essay C: example of a successful response

Bicycle safety discusses the injury rate of 2 major groups, riders under 16 and middle-aged riders. The major claim of this article is there is a difference in injury rates between these two groups due to numerous factors, in particular wearing a helmet.

By reviewing the data in both figure 1 and figure 2 it can be stated that many facts support claims made in the passage. In figure 1 we see that it is true in regards to brain and neck injuries middle-aged riders suffer nearly twice as much as riders under 16, but that doesn't seem to be the case for facial and extremity injuries. There is a smaller difference between the group in these 2 categories of injuries. Reason being these injuries do not involve the head or neck and independent of helmet use.

In figure 2 we see support for the claim of increased injuries do to not wearing a helmet. Only one percent of riders under 16 never wear a helmet compared to the 54% of middle-aged riders. While 75% of riders under 16 always wear a helmet compared to the 38% of middle-aged riders who always wears a helmet.

If you examine both figures you can see direct correlation between the percentage of riders not wearing/sometimes wearing a helmet and the difference in the rate of head & neck injuries

Comments on Essay C

This response represents an adequate performance of the task. The writer accurately identifies two claims from the reading selection and adequately explains the relationship of Figure 1 to one of these claims ("In figure 1 we see that it is true in regards to brain and neck injuries ...") and Figure 2 to the other claim ("In figure 2 we see support for the claim of increased injuries do to not wearing a helmet."). However, the analysis does not go beyond the obvious interpretation. Although the writer's language contains errors and some sentences are not well formed, the writer's meaning is almost always clear. And the flow of the response and the connections between ideas are satisfactory.

Essay D: example of almost successful response

As adults we always try to teach our children about safety and its importance. In the 1980's a law was passed that children under the age of fourteen should wear a helmet when riding their bikes. If found riding a bike without a helmet their parents were given a ticket. This came about due to many head injuries that were occurring when children would fall from their bikes. There is also a law against anyone riding a motor bike with a helmet.

Looking at the statistics, it appears that the law needs to be changed and that adults should practice what they preach. Whereas 75% of children were wearing helmet it showed that only 38% of adults were, this could support the claim as to why 35-54 years old were at risk for injuries which happen at nearly twice the rate of riders under the age of 16. Also the claim that less than half of adult cyclists regularly wear helmets.

The latter part of the report states that if there is to be a reduction in injuries among adults, attitudes toward helmet usage must change. The numbers in figure 2 support this claim. When you take a look at number of adults versus the number of children who wears a helmet it is approximately a ratio of 2 to 1. As I stated before may be the law needs to be changed to. Anyone who rides a bike should wear a helmet.

There was no supporting evidence that physical ability had anything to do with adults being injuries. Adults between the ages of 35-54 are almost always considered to be young healthy adults who are active.

Comments on Essay D

This response represents almost adequate performance of the task. In this response, the writer accurately identifies two claims from the reading selection and adequately explains the relationship of one claim to Figure 2 ("Whereas

75% of children were wearing a helmet it showed that only 38% of adults were, this could support the claim as to why 35-54 years old were at risk for injuries..."). Although the writer goes on to state another claim, he fails to establish the connecting link to Figure 1.

Essay E: example of a poor response

After looking at the two graphs and reading the report "Bicycle Safety" there are some major claims supported by the graphs. There is also some things that I saw that contradicted the claims as well.

In figure 1, it showed the "Serious injuries among cyclists by type of Injury and Age Group in 1998" and the "Injuries requiring Emergency Room Visits per 1000 cyclists." As far as brain injuries there 10,000 cyclists under age 16 taken to the ER, and about 25,000 aged 35-54 yrs. There were about 7,000 cyclists under 16 taken in for neck injuries and 17,000 cyclists 35-54 years w/the same injuries. As far as facial injuries, there were about 22,000 under 16 and 30,000 aged 35-54, and in the extremity fractures injury lists, about 29,000 under 16, and 40,000 ages 35-54.

In Figure 2, the pie graph shows the frequency of helmet use. For cyclists under 16, only 75% wore helmets at all times, 24% sometimes, and 1% never wore them. Cyclists ages 35-54 showed percentages of 54% never wearing helmets, 8% sometimes, and 38% always wearing helmets.

The report claimed that middle aged cyclists suffer from brain, facial, and neck injuries at nearly twice the rate as riders under age 16. This could be true for brain and neck injury, but as far as facial the rate seemed close to each other, and there was nothing stated about extremity fractures.

Overall, I feel that there could have been more supporting evidence for the rates and percentages. There was evidence as far as helmet use and non-use, but it didn't support the cause the way it should have.

Comments on Essay E

This response demonstrates poor performance of the task. In the response, the writer accurately identifies one claim from the reading selection ("The report claimed that middle aged cyclists suffer from brain, facial, and neck injuries at nearly twice the rate...") and adequately establishes a relationship between that claim and Figure 2 ("In Figure 2, the pie graph shows the frequency of helmet use. For cyclists under 16, only 75% wore helmets at all times. ..."). However, even though the response includes a discussion of Figure 1, the writer fails to draw the connecting link between Figure 1 and a second claim.

Essay F: example of a very poor response

There is no doubt in my mind that a middle-aged cyclist suffer more injuries than children after seeing Figure 1 chart. But most of those injuries are for not wearing a helmet. If you take a look at the difference between facial, brain, and neck injuries against extremity fractures, and the adult propensity to use helmet, Figure 2 very clear that most of their injuries are caused by the lack of helmet use.

We also have to understand that children under 16 use their bike with a recreational purpose, and in safe places, like parks. On the other hand, adults, especially in Europe and Asia use their bike as a transportation tool and they have to deal with traffic, and other factors.

The fact that we are adults does not mean that we are not going to have accident. We must learned from children that safety is very important point to take in consideration, specially when riding a bike. Helmets must be weared so that injuries are prevented.

Comments on Essay F

This response demonstrates some understanding of the claims but is unsuccessful because of a superficial interpretation of the data. Although the writer mentions Figures 1 and 2 in his essay, he fails to adequately link a claim to either one of the two figures. In the concluding paragraph, he seems to take the response in the direction of the writer's own opinion, something not called for in the directions.

Campus Resources: Testing and Test Preparation

Baruch College

Testing

Skills Assessment Office
1 Bernard Baruch Way (25th St.)
Room 5-224
646-312-4305

Test Preparation Information

SACC (Student Academic Consulting Center)
1 Bernard Baruch Way, Room 2-118
646-312-4830

English Department Writing Center
1 Bernard Baruch Way
6th Floor

Borough of Manhattan Community College

Testing

Testing Office -- N700
212-220-8086

Test Preparation Information

Developmental Skills -- N428
Prof. Sharona A. Levy
212-220-1414

Bronx Community College

Testing

Colston Hall, Rm 711
718-289-5760

Test Preparation Information

Writing Laboratory
Philosophy Hall Basement
718-289-5279

PASS Center
Sage Hall, Rm.210
718-289-5359

Brooklyn College

Testing

Testing Office -- 0203 James Hall
718-951-5916

Test Preparation Information

Learning Center -- 1300 Boylan Hall
718-951-5821

City College

Testing

Evaluation and Testing -- 213 Admin. Building
212-650-6488

Test Preparation Information

Writing Center -- Harris 015
212-650-8104

College of Staten Island

Testing

College Testing Office -- Room B-207
718-319-7921

Test Preparation Information

Instructional Support Services, Bldg. 1L, Rm 117
Contact: Richard Vento
718/982-3962

Hostos Community College

Testing

Office of Student Assessment -- A127
718-518-4346

Test Preparation Information

Academic Learning Center
Room C-350
718-518-6624

Hunter College

Testing

Testing Center
Room 150 Hunter North
212-772-4898/4868/4920

Test Preparation Information

The Writing Center
416 Thomas Hunter
212-772-4212

John Jay College

Testing

Testing Office -- 3258 North Hall
212-237-8108

Test Preparation Information

Writing Center -- 2450 North Hall
212-237-8567

Kingsborough Community College

Testing

Testing Office – P204
718-368-4975

Test Preparation Information

English Skills Center – L219
718-368-5405

LaGuardia Community College

Testing

Testing Office, M149
718-482-5149

Test Preparation Information

Writing Center – E1030
718-482-5680

Lehman College

Testing

Testing Office
205 Shuster
718-960-8156

Test Preparation Information

Academic Center for Excellence
205 Old Gym Building
718-960-8175

Medgar Evers College

Testing

Testing Office – CP23
Carroll Street Building
718-270-6459

Test Preparation Information

Learning Center
2036 Bedford Building
718-270-5139

New York City College of Technology

Testing

Testing Office
Room 403/Namm Hall
718-260-5171

Test Preparation Information

Learning Center
Room AG18/ Namm Hall
718-260-5874

Queens College

Testing

Testing Office
231 Kiely Hall
718-997-5680

Test Preparation Information

Writing Skills Workshop
232 Kiely Hall
718-997-5676

Queensborough Community College

Testing

Testing Office – Room L-430
718-631-6358

Test Preparation Information

Writing Center – ISSC Building
718-631-6663

York College

Testing

Testing Center
Room 1G05A
718-262-2012

Test Preparation Information

Writing Lab
Room 1C18
718-262-2494

Campus Resources: CPE Liaisons

The CPE Liaison at each campus is a faculty member who advises students who are about to take, or who have taken, the CPE; helps students plan for and choose courses and workshops that may assist them in acquiring the skills measured by the CPE; and assists students in appeals concerning the CPE.

Baruch College

Robert Scotto
English Department
646-312-4008

Borough of Manhattan Community

Sharona Levy
Developmental Skills
212-220-1414

Bronx Community College

Rex Butt
Communication Arts & Sciences
718-289-5757

Brooklyn College

Len Fox
English Department
718-951-5728

City College

Geraldine Murphy
English Department
212-650-5407

College of Staten Island

Ivan Smodlaka
Testing/Psychology
718-982-2382

Hostos Community College

Diana Diaz
English Department
718-518-6752

Hunter College

Steven Serafin
Reading/Writing Center
212-772-4212

John Jay College

Mark McBeth
English Department
212-237-8815

Kingsborough Community College

Gene McQuillan
English Department
718-368-5834

LaGuardia Community College

Sue Young
English Department
718-482-5671

Lehman College

Eleanor Lundeen
Nursing Department
718-960-1170

Medgar Evers College

Lorraine Kuziw
Language, Literature and Philosophy
718-270-4951

New York City College of Technology

Regina Lebowitz
English Department
718-260-5153

Queens College

Yu Ren Dong
Secondary Education
718-997-5171

Queensborough Community College

David Shimkin
English Department
718-631-6302

York College

Cynthia Haller
English Department
718-262-2468