

AP English Language and Composition Synthesis Question

Sustainable Eating

In vitro meat, also called cultured meat, cruelty-free meat, and test-tube meat, is an animal-flesh product that has never been part of a living animal with exception of the fetal calf serum taken from a slaughtered cow. Several research projects have worked on *in vitro* meat in the laboratory. Recent demonstrations took place whereupon researchers consumed an *in vitro* beefburger for the London press. There remain difficulties to be overcome before *in vitro* meat becomes commercially available. Cultured meat is prohibitively expensive, but it is expected that the cost could be reduced to compete with that of conventionally obtained meat as technology improves. *In vitro* meat is also an ethical issue. Some argue that it is less objectionable than traditionally obtained meat because it doesn't involve killing and reduces the risk of animal cruelty, while others disagree with eating meat that has not developed naturally.

Imagine that there is a grassroots campaign developing that wants Congress to legislate against *in vitro* meat production. Carefully read the following eight sources, including the introductory information for each source. Then synthesize information from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-developed essay that supports or challenges this proposed ban.

Make sure that your argument is central; use the sources to illustrate and support your reasoning. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You must refer to the sources below in MLA format (author page #)— the sources can be found on pages 958-985 in your textbook (*The Language of Composition* by Renee Shea, et al).

1. Peter Menzel, from *Hungry Planet* (photo essay)
2. Michael Pollan, *A Naturalist in the Supermarket*
3. James McWilliams, *The Locavore Myth*
4. Jonathan Safran Foer, *The American Table* and *The Global Table*
5. Nicolette Hahn Niman, *The Carnivore's Dilemma*
6. Will Allen, *A Good Manifesto for America*
7. A.J. Jacobs, *Farm to Table: How Our Restaurant Gets Its Food to Your Plate*
8. Michael Specter, from *Test-Tube Burgers*

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Sample Scoring Guidelines for the Synthesis Essay

9	Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for essays that are scored an 8 and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument and synthesis of cited sources, or impressive in their control of language.
8	Effective: Essays earning a score of 8 effectively develop a thesis on the concerns of furthering current scientific knowledge and effectively create an argument on the nature of and limits of scientific knowledge. They effectively support their position by effectively synthesizing and citing at least three of the sources. The writer's argument is convincing, and the cited sources effectively support the writer's position. The prose demonstrates an ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not flawless.
7	Essays earning a score of 7 fit the description of essays that are scored a 6 but are distinguished by more complete or more purposeful argumentation and synthesis of cited sources, or a more mature prose style.
6	Adequate: Essays earning a score of 6 adequately develop a thesis on the concerns of furthering current scientific knowledge and adequately create an argument on the nature of and limits of scientific knowledge. They adequately synthesize and cite at least three of the sources. The writer's argument is generally convincing and the cited sources generally support the writer's position, but the argument is less developed or less cogent than the arguments of essays earning higher scores. Though the language may contain lapses in diction or syntax, generally the prose is clear.
5	Essays earning a score of 5 develop a thesis on the concerns of furthering current scientific knowledge and create an argument on the nature of and limits of scientific knowledge. They support their position by synthesizing and citing at least three sources, but their arguments and their use of cited sources are somewhat limited, inconsistent, or uneven. The writer's argument is generally clear, and the sources generally support the writer's position, but the links between the sources and the argument may be strained. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the writer's ideas adequately.
4	Inadequate: Essays earning a score of 4 inadequately develop a thesis on the concerns of furthering current scientific knowledge and inadequately create an argument on the nature of and limits of scientific knowledge. They attempt to present an argument and support their position by synthesizing and citing at least two sources but may misunderstand, misrepresent, or oversimplify either their own argument or the cited sources they include. The link between the argument and the cited sources is weak. The prose of 4 essays may suggest immature control of writing.
3	Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for the score of 4 but demonstrate less understanding of the cited sources, less success in developing their own position, or less control of writing.
2	Little Success: Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate little success in developing a thesis on the concerns of furthering current scientific knowledge and creating an argument on the nature of and limits of scientific knowledge. They may merely allude to knowledge gained from reading the sources rather than citing the sources themselves. These essays may misread the sources, fail to present an argument, or substitute a simpler task by merely responding to the question tangentially or by summarizing the sources. The prose of essays scored a 2 often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing, such as a lack of development or organization, grammatical problems, or a lack of control.
1	Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for the score of 2 but are especially simplistic or weak in their control of writing or do not cite even one source.
0	Essays earning a score of zero (0) are on-topic responses that receive no credit, such as those that merely repeat the prompt.
--	Essays earning a dash (—) are blank responses or responses that are completely off topic.