

# AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

## Question 1

It is suggested that you spend 15 minutes reading the question, analyzing and evaluating sources, and 40 minutes writing your response.

(This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

Artificial intelligence (AI)—perceiving, synthesizing, and inferring information—is intelligence demonstrated by machines, as opposed to intelligence displayed by humans. In the past five years, AI has become an increasingly large part of modern life. In response, many arguments have been made about the value of AI and about the threat it poses to human life.

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source. Then synthesize material from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-written essay in which you develop your position on the potential to utilize artificial intelligence as a tool *or* weapon.

Your argument should be the focus of your essay. Use the sources to develop your argument and explain the reasoning for it. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

Source A (Metlukh)

Source B (Sanders)

Source C (ChatGPT)

Source D (Akselrod)

Source E (Khullar)

Source F (Statista)

Developed by George Goga

## Source A

### Nata Metlukh, “Don’t Ban ChatGPT in Schools. Teach With It.”

*The following is excerpted from a New York Times op-ed on technology published in 2023.*

ChatGPT is new — it was released in late November — but it has already sent many educators into a panic. Students are using it to write their assignments, passing off A.I.-generated essays and problem sets as their own. Teachers and school administrators have been scrambling to catch students using the tool to cheat, and they are fretting about the havoc ChatGPT could wreak on their lesson plans. (Some publications have declared, perhaps a bit prematurely, that ChatGPT has killed homework altogether.)

Cheating is the immediate, practical fear, along with the bot’s propensity to spit out wrong or misleading answers. But there are existential worries, too. One high school teacher told me that he used ChatGPT to evaluate a few of his students’ papers, and that the app had provided more detailed and useful feedback on them than he would have, in a tiny fraction of the time.

“Am I even necessary now?” he asked me, only half joking.

Some schools have responded to ChatGPT by cracking down. New York City public schools, for example, recently blocked ChatGPT access on school computers and networks, citing “concerns about negative impacts on student learning, and concerns regarding the safety and accuracy of content.” Schools in other cities, including Seattle, have also restricted access. (Tim Robinson, a spokesman for Seattle Public Schools, told me that ChatGPT was blocked on school devices in December, “along with five other cheating tools.”)

It’s easy to understand why educators feel threatened. ChatGPT is a freakishly capable tool that landed in their midst with no warning, and it performs reasonably well across a wide variety of tasks and academic subjects. There are legitimate questions about the ethics of A.I.-generated writing, and concerns about whether the answers ChatGPT gives are accurate. (Often, they’re not.) And I’m sympathetic to teachers who feel that they have enough to worry about, without adding A.I.-generated homework to the mix.

#### **ChatGPT can be a teacher’s best friend**

The second reason not to ban ChatGPT from the classroom is that, with the right approach, it can be an effective teaching tool.

Cherie Shields, a high school English teacher in Oregon, told me that she had recently assigned students in one of her classes to use ChatGPT to create outlines for their essays comparing and contrasting two 19th-century short stories that touch on themes of gender and mental health: “The Story of an Hour,” by Kate Chopin, and “The Yellow Wallpaper,” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Once the outlines were generated, her students put their laptops away and wrote their essays longhand.

The process, she said, had not only deepened students’ understanding of the stories. It had also taught them about interacting with A.I. models, and how to coax a helpful response out of one.

“They have to understand, ‘I need this to produce an outline about X, Y and Z,’ and they have to think very carefully about it,” Ms. Shields said. “And if they don’t get the result that they want, they can always revise it.”

Creating outlines is just one of the many ways that ChatGPT could be used in class. It could write personalized lesson plans for each student (“explain Newton’s laws of motion to a visual-spatial learner”) and generate ideas for classroom activities (“write a script for a ‘Friends’ episode that takes place at the Constitutional Convention”). It could serve as an after-hours tutor (“explain the Doppler effect, using language an eighth grader could understand”) or a debate sparring partner (“convince me that animal testing should be banned”). It could be used as a starting point for in-class exercises, or a tool for English language learners to improve their basic writing skills. (The teaching blog *Ditch That Textbook* has a long list of possible classroom uses for ChatGPT.)

### **ChatGPT teaches students about the world they’ll inhabit**

Now, I’ll take off my tech columnist hat for a second, and confess that writing this piece has made me a little sad. I loved school, and it pains me, on some level, to think that instead of sharpening their skills by writing essays about “The Sun Also Rises” or straining to factor a trigonometric expression, today’s students might simply ask an A.I. chatbot to do it for them.

I also don’t believe that educators who are reflexively opposed to ChatGPT are being irrational. This type of A.I. really is (if you’ll excuse the buzzword) disruptive — to classroom routines, to longstanding pedagogical practices, and to the basic principle that the work students turn in should reflect cogitation happening inside their brains, rather than in the latent space of a machine learning model hosted on a distant supercomputer.

But the barricade has fallen. Tools like ChatGPT aren’t going anywhere; they’re only going to improve, and barring some major regulatory intervention, this particular form of machine intelligence is now a fixture of our society.

“Large language models aren’t going to get less capable in the next few years,” said Ethan Mollick, a professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. “We need to figure out a way to adjust to these tools, and not just ban them.”

That’s the biggest reason not to ban it from the classroom, in fact — because today’s students will graduate into a world full of generative A.I. programs. They’ll need to know their way around these tools — their strengths and weaknesses, their hallmarks and blind spots — in order to work alongside them. To be good citizens, they’ll need hands-on experience to understand how this type of A.I. works, what types of bias it contains, and how it can be misused and weaponized.

This adjustment won’t be easy. Sudden technological shifts rarely are. But who better to guide students into this strange new world than their teachers?

## Source B

### Nathan Sanders, “How ChatGPT Hijacks Democracy”

*The following is excerpted from a New York Times op-ed on technology published in 2023.*

Launched just weeks ago, ChatGPT is already threatening to upend how we draft everyday communications like emails, college essays and myriad other forms of writing.

Created by the company OpenAI, ChatGPT is a chatbot that can automatically respond to written prompts in a manner that is sometimes eerily close to human.

But for all the consternation over the potential for humans to be replaced by machines in formats like poetry and sitcom scripts, a far greater threat looms: artificial intelligence replacing humans in the democratic processes — not through voting, but through lobbying.

ChatGPT could automatically compose comments submitted in regulatory processes. It could write letters to the editor for publication in local newspapers. It could comment on news articles, blog entries and social media posts millions of times every day. It could mimic the work that the Russian Internet Research Agency did in its attempt to influence our 2016 elections, but without the agency’s reported multimillion-dollar budget and hundreds of employees.

Automatically generated comments aren’t a new problem. For some time, we have struggled with bots, machines that automatically post content. Five years ago, at least a million automatically drafted comments were believed to have been submitted to the Federal Communications Commission regarding proposed regulations on net neutrality. In 2019, a Harvard undergraduate, as a test, used a text-generation program to submit 1,001 comments in response to a government request for public input on a Medicaid issue. Back then, submitting comments was just a game of overwhelming numbers.

Platforms have gotten better at removing “coordinated inauthentic behavior.” Facebook, for example, has been removing over a billion fake accounts a year. But such messages are just the beginning. Rather than flooding legislators’ inboxes with supportive emails, or dominating the Capitol switchboard with synthetic voice calls, an A.I. system with the sophistication of ChatGPT but trained on relevant data could selectively target key legislators and influencers to identify the weakest points in the policymaking system and ruthlessly exploit them through direct communication, public relations campaigns, horse trading or other points of leverage.

When we humans do these things, we call it lobbying. Successful agents in this sphere pair precision message writing with smart targeting strategies. Right now, the only thing stopping a ChatGPT-equipped lobbyist from executing something resembling a rhetorical drone warfare campaign is a lack of precision targeting. A.I. could provide techniques for that as well.

A system that can understand political networks, if paired with the textual-generation capabilities of ChatGPT, could identify the member of Congress with the most leverage over a particular policy area — say, corporate taxation or military spending. Like human lobbyists, such a system could target undecided representatives sitting on committees controlling the policy of interest and then focus resources on members of the majority party when a bill moves toward a floor vote.

Once individuals and strategies are identified, an A.I. chatbot like ChatGPT could craft written messages to be used in letters, comments — anywhere text is useful. Human lobbyists could also target those individuals directly. It's the combination that's important: Editorial and social media comments get you only so far, and knowing which legislators to target isn't in itself enough.

This ability to understand and target actors within a network would create a tool for A.I. hacking, exploiting vulnerabilities in social, economic and political systems with incredible speed and scope. Legislative systems would be a particular target, because the motive for attacking policymaking systems is so strong, because the data for training such systems is so widely available and because the use of A.I. may be so hard to detect — particularly if it is being used strategically to guide human actors.

The data necessary to train such strategic targeting systems will only grow with time. Open societies generally make their democratic processes a matter of public record, and most legislators are eager — at least, performatively so — to accept and respond to messages that appear to be from their constituents.

Maybe an A.I. system could uncover which members of Congress have significant sway over leadership but still have low enough public profiles that there is only modest competition for their attention. It could then pinpoint the SuperPAC or public interest group with the greatest impact on that legislator's public positions. Perhaps it could even calibrate the size of donation needed to influence that organization or direct targeted online advertisements carrying a strategic message to its members. For each policy end, the right audience; and for each audience, the right message at the right time.

What makes the threat of A.I.-powered lobbyists greater than the threat already posed by the high-priced lobbying firms on K Street is their potential for acceleration. Human lobbyists rely on decades of experience to find strategic solutions to achieve a policy outcome. That expertise is limited, and therefore expensive.

A.I. could, theoretically, do the same thing much more quickly and cheaply. Speed out of the gate is a huge advantage in an ecosystem in which public opinion and media narratives can become entrenched quickly, as is being nimble enough to shift rapidly in response to chaotic world events.

... However, the biggest and most powerful institutions will likely use any A.I. lobbying techniques most successfully. After all, executing the best lobbying strategy still requires insiders — people who can walk the halls of the legislature — and money. Lobbying isn't just about giving the right message to the right person at the right time; it's also about giving money to the right person at the right time. And while an A.I. chatbot can identify who should be on the receiving end of those campaign contributions, humans will, for the foreseeable future, need to supply the cash. So while it's impossible to predict what a future filled with A.I. lobbyists will look like, it will probably make the already influential and powerful even more so.

## Source C

### ChatGPT, “ChatGPT Composition”

*The following is a response generated by ChatGPT in 2023 when it was asked to describe what it is and what it can be used for.*

I am ChatGPT, a language model developed by OpenAI. I can be used to answer questions, provide information, and engage in conversations on a wide range of topics, including history, science, literature, and more.

As an AI language model, I can be a helpful resource for students as they research and learn new information. I can assist with homework assignments, provide explanations, and answer questions.

However, it's important to note that my responses are generated based on the data I have been trained on, which is limited to the knowledge and language patterns present in the dataset. This means that my answers may not always be accurate or appropriate, and they should always be verified and supplemented with additional sources of information.

In terms of harm to education, there is a concern that students may become too reliant on AI language models like myself, which can lead to a lack of critical thinking and analysis. It's important for students to continue to engage in independent research and thinking, and to use AI tools like myself as just one of many resources available to them.

## Source D

### Olga Akselrod, “How Artificial Intelligence Can Deepen Racial and Economic Inequities”

*The following is excerpted from an essay published by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in 2021.*

Proponents of expanding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) often point to its potential to stimulate economic growth — increased productivity at lower costs, a higher GDP per capita, and job creation have all been touted as possible benefits. The promise of an economic boost via machine learning is understandably seductive, and private and government actors are now regularly using AI in key areas of economic opportunity, including education, housing, employment, and credit, to name just a few. But as AI adoption is cast as a smart economic investment in the future, it’s important to pause and ask: Whose futures and whose wallets are we talking about?

There is ample evidence of the discriminatory harm that AI tools can cause to already marginalized groups. After all, AI is built by humans and deployed in systems and institutions that have been marked by entrenched discrimination — from the criminal legal system, to housing, to the workplace, to our financial systems. Bias is often baked into the outcomes the AI is asked to predict. Likewise, bias is in the data used to train the AI — data that is often discriminatory or unrepresentative for people of color, women, or other marginalized groups — and can rear its head throughout the AI’s design, development, implementation, and use. The tech industry’s lack of representation of people who understand and can work to address the potential harms of these technologies only exacerbates this problem.

There are numerous examples of the harms that AI can have. AI tools have perpetuated housing discrimination, such as in tenant selection and mortgage qualifications, as well as hiring and financial lending discrimination.

For example, AI systems used to evaluate potential tenants rely on court records and other datasets that have their own built-in biases that reflect systemic racism, sexism, and ableism, and are notoriously full of errors. People are regularly denied housing, despite their ability to pay rent, because tenant screening algorithms deem them ineligible or unworthy.

These algorithms use data such as eviction and criminal histories, which reflect long standing racial disparities in housing and the criminal legal system that are discriminatory towards marginalized communities. People of color seeking loans to purchase homes or refinance have been overcharged by millions thanks to AI tools used by lenders. And many employers now use AI-driven tools to interview and screen job seekers, many of which pose enormous risks for discrimination against people with disabilities and other protected groups. Rather than help eliminate discriminatory practices, AI has worsened them — hampering the economic security of marginalized groups that have long dealt with systemic discrimination.

That’s why today, the ACLU, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Upturn, and two dozen partner organizations are calling on the Biden administration to take concrete steps to bring civil rights and equity to the forefront of its AI and technology policies, and to actively work to address the systemic harms of these technologies. Just two weeks ago, many of the same groups also joined together in an in-depth response to a request for information by federal financial agencies on the use of AI, raising many of the same concerns. Many groups have

also offered concrete policy recommendations to federal agencies on addressing technology's role in discrimination in the domains of hiring, housing, and financial services.

Thus far, federal agencies that regulate industries using AI have not taken the steps necessary to ensure that AI systems are accountable to the people they impact or that they comply with civil rights laws. Federal legislative and regulatory efforts have not yet methodically undertaken the task of ensuring our civil rights laws protect vulnerable people from the harms exacerbated by today's technologies. In fact, while the Biden administration has made an overarching commitment to center racial equity throughout federal policymaking, the administration's emerging AI and technology priorities have lacked the necessary focus on equity for people of color and others who have been subject to discrimination and bias. The administration to date has overlooked necessary civil rights and civil liberties perspectives as AI and technology policies are being developed, which risks further perpetuating systemic racism and economic inequality.

The bottom line is that the administration and federal agencies must prioritize and address all the ways that AI and technology can exacerbate racial and other inequities and ensure that its policies and enforcement activities lead to more equitable outcomes. Decades of discrimination have left people of color and Black people in particular, women, and other marginalized groups at an economic disadvantage in the U.S. The Biden administration must work to reverse the trends that continue to this day, which must necessarily include an emphasis on how modern digital technologies perpetuate inequity. The economic and racial divide in our country will only deepen if the administration fails to do so.

## Source E

### Dhruv Khullar, “Can A.I. Treat Mental Illness?”

*The following is excerpted from an article published in The New Yorker in 2023.*

In 2017, Alison Darcy, a clinical research psychologist at Stanford, founded Woebot, a company that provides automated mental-health support through a smartphone app. Its approach is based on cognitive behavioral therapy, or C.B.T.—a treatment that aims to change patterns in people’s thinking. The app uses a form of artificial intelligence called natural language processing to interpret what users say, guiding them through sequences of pre-written responses that spur them to consider how their minds could work differently. When Darcy was in graduate school, she treated dozens of hospitalized patients using C.B.T.; many experienced striking improvements but relapsed after they left the hospital. C.B.T. is “best done in small quantities over and over and over again,” she told me. In the analog world, that sort of consistent, ongoing care is hard to find: more than half of U.S. counties don’t have a single psychiatrist, and, last year, a survey conducted by the American Psychological Association found that sixty per cent of mental-health practitioners don’t have openings for new patients. “No therapist can be there with you all day, every day,” Darcy said. Although the company employs only about a hundred people, it has counselled nearly a million and a half, the majority of whom live in areas with a shortage of mental-health providers.

Maria, a hospice nurse who lives near Milwaukee with her husband and two teen-age children, might be a typical Woebot user. She has long struggled with anxiety and depression, but had not sought help before. “I had a lot of denial,” she told me. This changed during the pandemic, when her daughter started showing signs of depression, too. Maria took her to see a psychologist, and committed to prioritizing her own mental health. At first, she was skeptical about the idea of conversing with an app—as a caregiver, she felt strongly that human connection was essential for healing. Still, after a challenging visit with a patient, when she couldn’t stop thinking about what she might have done differently, she texted Woebot. “It sounds like you might be ruminating,” Woebot told her. It defined the concept: rumination means circling back to the same negative thoughts over and over. “Does that sound right?” it asked. “Would you like to try a breathing technique?”

Ahead of another patient visit, Maria recalled, “I just felt that something really bad was going to happen.” She texted Woebot, which explained the concept of catastrophic thinking. It can be useful to prepare for the worst, Woebot said—but that preparation can go too far. “It helped me name this thing that I do all the time,” Maria said. She found Woebot so beneficial that she started seeing a human therapist.

Woebot is one of several successful phone-based chatbots, some aimed specifically at mental health, others designed to provide entertainment, comfort, or sympathetic conversation. Today, millions of people talk to programs and apps such as Happify, which encourages users to “break old patterns,” and Replika, an “A.I. companion” that is “always on your side,” serving as a friend, a mentor, or even a romantic partner. The worlds of psychiatry, therapy, computer science, and consumer technology are converging: increasingly, we soothe ourselves with our devices, while

programmers, psychiatrists, and startup founders design A.I. systems that analyze medical records and therapy sessions in hopes of diagnosing, treating, and even predicting mental illness. In 2021, digital startups that focussed on mental health secured more than five billion dollars in venture capital—more than double that for any other medical issue.

The scale of investment reflects the size of the problem. Roughly one in five American adults has a mental illness. An estimated one in twenty has what’s considered a serious mental illness—major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia—that profoundly impairs the ability to live, work, or relate to others. Decades-old drugs such as Prozac and Xanax, once billed as revolutionary antidotes to depression and anxiety, have proved less effective than many had hoped; care remains fragmented, belated, and inadequate; and the over-all burden of mental illness in the U.S., as measured by years lost to disability, seems to have increased. Suicide rates have fallen around the world since the nineteen-nineties, but in America they’ve risen by about a third. Mental-health care is “a shitstorm,” Thomas Insel, a former director of the National Institute of Mental Health, told me. “Nobody likes what they get. Nobody is happy with what they give. It’s a complete mess.” Since leaving the N.I.M.H., in 2015, Insel has worked at a string of digital-mental-health companies.

The treatment of mental illness requires imagination, insight, and empathy—traits that A.I. can only pretend to have. And yet, Eliza, which Weizenbaum named after Eliza Doolittle, the fake-it-till-you-make-it heroine of George Bernard Shaw’s “Pygmalion,” created a therapeutic illusion despite having “no memory” and “no processing power,” Christian writes. What might a system like OpenAI’s ChatGPT, which has been trained on vast swaths of the writing on the Internet, conjure? An algorithm that analyzes patient records has no interior understanding of human beings—but it might still identify real psychiatric problems. Can artificial minds heal real ones? And what do we stand to gain, or lose, in letting them try?

... ChatGPT isn’t designed for therapy, but one evening, not long ago, I asked it to help me manage the stress I feel as a doctor and a dad, telling it to impersonate various psychological luminaries. As Freud, ChatGPT told me that, “often, stress is the result of repressed emotions and conflicts within oneself.” As B. F. Skinner, it emphasized that “stress is often the result of environmental factors and our reactions to them.” Writing as though it were a close friend, it told me, “Be kind to yourself—you’re doing the best you can and that’s all that matters.” It all seemed like decent advice.

ChatGPT’s fluidity with language opens up new possibilities. In 2015, Rob Morris, an applied computational psychologist with a Ph.D. from M.I.T., co-founded an online “emotional support network” called Koko. Users of the Koko app have access to a variety of online features, including receiving messages of support—commiseration, condolences, relationship advice—from other users, and sending their own. Morris had often wondered about having an A.I. write messages, and decided to experiment with GPT-3, the precursor to ChatGPT. In 2020, he test-drove the A.I. in front of Aaron Beck, a creator of cognitive behavioral therapy, and Martin Seligman, a leading positive-psychology researcher. They concluded that the effort was premature.

Source F

Statista, "ChatGPT Sprints to One Million Users"

The following is excerpted from a public data website.

