

2012 SCORING GUIDELINES

English Language, Question 3 | Certainty and Doubt

General Directions: This scoring guide will be useful for most of the essays you read. If it seems inappropriate for a specific paper, ask your Table Leader for assistance. Always show your Table Leader books that seem to have no response or that contain responses that seem unrelated to the question. Do not assign a score of 0 or – without this consultation.

Your score should reflect your judgment of the paper's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 40 minutes to read and write; the paper, therefore, is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the paper as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well.

All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional lapses in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into your holistic evaluation of a paper's overall quality. In no case should you score a paper with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics higher than a 2.

9 Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for the score of 8 and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, thorough in development, or impressive in their control of language.

8 Effective

Essays earning a score of 8 **effectively** develop a position on the relationship between certainty and doubt. The evidence and explanations used are appropriate and convincing, and the argument is especially coherent and well developed. The prose demonstrates a consistent ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

7 Essays earning a score of 7 meet the criteria for the score of 6 but provide more complete explanation, more thorough development, or a more mature prose style.

6 Adequate

Essays earning a score of 6 **adequately** develop a position on the relationship between certainty and doubt. The evidence and explanations used are appropriate and sufficient, and the argument is coherent and adequately developed. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

5 Essays earning a score of 5 develop a position on the relationship between certainty and doubt. The evidence or explanations used may be uneven, inconsistent, or limited. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the writer's ideas.

4 Inadequate

Essays earning a score of 4 **inadequately** develop a position on the relationship between certainty and doubt. The argument may have lapses in coherence or be inadequately developed. The prose generally conveys the writer's ideas but may be less consistent in controlling the elements of effective writing.

3 Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for the score of 4 but demonstrate less success in developing a position on the relationship between certainty and doubt. The essays may show less maturity in control of writing.

2 Little Success

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in developing a position on the relationship between certainty and doubt. These essays may misunderstand the prompt, or substitute a simpler task by responding to the prompt tangentially with unrelated, inaccurate, or inappropriate explanation. The prose often demonstrates

consistent weaknesses in writing, such as grammatical problems, a lack of development or organization, or a lack of control.

1 Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for the score of 2 but are undeveloped, especially simplistic in their explanation and argument, or weak in their control of language, or especially lacking in coherence and development.

0 Indicates an off-topic response, one that merely repeats the prompt, an entirely crossed-out response, a drawing, or a response in a language other than English.

– Indicates an entirely blank response.

Question 3

Certainty and Doubt

KMy position on a well-organized essay is that sometimes its good to have doubt about somethings, because not all the time your going to be right on something its good to question your thinking, your though before you speak.

Not everything you read, or heard people tells you is truth. Sometimes you have to go futher down and check or see if you find anything that person may have told you before you come to an agreement or make up your mind!

Sometimes many people don't doubt themselves before they speak or think! Just because they think their idea is right, they want to speak. I'm not saying its bad, but sometime you might want to sit back relax and question your thinking and doubt yourself a little to see if you're happy with your answer/thinking then you can speak up and share your idea with others.

Befor I used to do the samething I always taught my thinking was right, I never used to sit back think for a little bit more or even question my thinking before I speak up about something!

WIn William Lyon Phelps statement about certainty, he explains that if you have any sense or certainty that powerful beliefs provide then you can achieve anything. I agree with his statement, because if you believe in yourself and you have the certainty that whatever you put your mind to you are capable of doing it. Without certainty you have doubt and with doubt you have nothing – Christina M.B. You can't make it in life with doubt because you doubt all the time you wouldn't even try and if you don't try you don't know what you're capabale of doing.

Being doubtful is not healthy. It makes you become less interested in anything. You will began to not care about a lot of things.

FThrough medicine, it becomes apparent that statistical certainty, accompanied by doubt, is always nothing more than a statistic: what is probable to happen, but may not necessarily happen.

When suffering from Parkinsons, a victims dopamine levels are highly askewed, resulting in uncontrolable tremors. Unfortunately, there are little to no effective methods that have been found to treat the patient and alleviate their symptoms. One method developed in Canada had phenominal results, but is considered to be a controversial method. It was not what the doctors were doing that made the study controversial, but what the doctors were not doing. They would treat the patients with one pill called

Obecelp, a day and then documented the results over time. Prior to taking Obecelp, the patients were told of the "great results" people had from it in other case studies. With this in mind, the patients hoped to have finally found an effective and easy way to treat their chronic illness, and for more than half of the patients their symptoms decreased dramatically. But this drastic change in symptoms baffled doctors, because all that they had administered to the patients was capsulated sugar (Note that "Obecelp" is merely "plecebo" spelt backwards). How could this be possible? How could an illness which affects countless people be treated just by the idea of being treated? This is because, as William Lyon Phelps once said, "If you develop the absolute sense of certainty that powerful beliefs provide, then you can get yourself to accomplish virtually anything, including those things that other people are certain are impossible". The Oblecep case study is the epitome of what Phelps is expressing, because the only thing changed in the lives of the patients during the study was their own belief that their body was being introduced to a drug that has had great results in the past. It is truly remarkable that a personal belief, when felt strongly enough, has the capacity to produce something as substantial as establishing homeostasis at a neurological level. Despite the unlikely hood that a dramatic change can from, what appears to be, nothing, it is apparent that even the least bit of certainty can overpower the greatest of doubts.

HHI would rather be certain than doubtful. In any case, I would prefer to believe in myself and know for a fact that I can and will accomplish everything I set out to accomplish. I guess that's the major problem between optimistic and pessimestic people.

I would rather stand for certainty because, "a life filled with doubt is a life of worry." Some people walk around their whole life feeling like failures, always trying to be better but never seeing progress, because they don't believe! Why struggle for something only to cheat yourself all of it.

True, some believers live with their heads in the clouds. But better to have your head in the clouds, rather than buried in the dirt. I chose to believe because I am chosing to succeed. Some of the most successful people started out as dreamers. Some of the most useful inventions started out as pipe dreams. But they got created because those dreamers set out to become achievers.

Growing up as a child, I had so many adults tell me “You can be anything you want to be if you just reach for the stars.” I can honestly say that I am a true believer in those words, because I know. First you believe, then you reach, then you jump, then you leap then you achieve. The best thing about believers are their levels of joy. Believers have this natural glow about them. Their hearts are always happy, because they have something to believe in, to be joyful about. I hate doubters because they turn out angry at the world and filled with darkness because they can't believe.

I stand to believe, because I stand to achieve. Yes, we are dreamers but we are achievers also. To accomplish you must first dream. If you chose to dream, dream with certainty.

NN Going through the choices found in everyday life, one must be able to know where their values lie in order to make a solid decision. However, always being certain in oneself leaves little to no room for improvement. The topic has been questioned by many philosophical figures and displayed in their own forms of understanding the world.

The wild array of theories that go into fields like theocratic philosophies are categorized into two main sides: free will and determinism. The differences between free will and determinism are much of the same as the differences between certainty and doubt because the free will of human beings to live without respite from a creator or to make decisions on their own accord is of equal contrast to those who in determinism believe that their fate has been decided or that they *MUST* adhere to the teachings of a God. One example of a philosopher who feels so confident in the certainty of his beliefs is St. Thomas Aquinas. In his assertions, he responds to any doubts against the existence of God by saying more or less that there *HAS* to be a God who made you, because you can feel the truth in it. Such a simple and somewhat naïve answer to a question that has oftentimes plagued the minds and well-beings of people, and has strengthened fanatics to wage religious wars all over the world. When we see that simple answer backed solely by his certainty that there had to be some great creator with a purpose, we should be able to step back and ask, ‘Really? Is that all you can say for yourself?’ Being certain of these types of major beliefs will tend to make you seem close-minded. Call it loyalty to your values all you want, but there will always be that element of provincial thinking that will impede on the growth of worldly intake.

People these days are always looking for a concrete answer because they find strength in knowing. Certainty is supported by structure and we like

to build our lives on little foundations of truth. In addition to my studies in theocratic philosophy, my studies in ethical philosophy shed some light into the nature of being sure of oneself, and questioning. In ethics, the main dilemma is determining how to make the correct decision. Our society has made a difference between the fact that wrong actions will provide consequences and right actions will lead to rewards. We all look for ‘rewards’, so how can we ensure that what we are doing is right? Jeremy Bentham, a very well known philosopher born in 1749 constructed a Hedonistic Calculus which would aid in determining choices. It would figure out, based on seven categories of happiness, which decision would be best to go with. Examples of what categories are factors are the propinquity of the decision’s effect, the intensity, and the number of people who will benefit from the decision as opposed to it. The situation is then ranked in all seven of the categories and then if it seems that one outcome ranks higher than the other, then that is the decision a person should go with. This mathematical approach seems to provide the structure that humans crave for so much. The key to happiness has been found in this neat set of rules hasn’t it? Nope. Even Bentham himself says that this calculus isn’t for certain. Rather, it is more of an outline of what should be considered. Bentham also states that if you feel in your emotions that the less likely decision is what you should go for, then go for it! The doubt that is inherent in the nervousness of making a decision should not dissuade anyone from doing it. Certainty seems to me to be an idealized belief that people attempt to achieve so that they can have peace of mind in the choices they make.

Certainty provides a strict and dull answer to the great ambiguities of life. It too often outlines what should be thought and how something should be thought, but still we rely on it to take us through each day. What happened to all the protestations for freedom and independence. Were those all just ones from one structured form of a certain set of rules to go and find comfort in another imprisoning vice of morals? To doubt, is to take advantage of being a real human because doubt provides a sweet sensibility to reality and makes sure that life to the observer is very much real and uncertain.

SS Certainty and doubt are inevitable parts of life. Some things, such as the sun coming up every morning, are absolutely certain and leave no room for doubt. Other things, like any given NFL team winning the Super Bowl in a specific year, are very uncertain and leave much room for doubt. Most things lie somewhere in between, however, and a mixture of

the two is more practical than either by itself in most circumstances.

This necessity for balance between certainty and doubt comes into play very distinctly when a person is trying to achieve a difficult goal, perform a difficult task, or play a difficult game. Too much certainty, which in this case translates to overconfidence and arrogance, is detrimental to the achievement of a goal. When someone is overconfident, he does not take the given task seriously enough, thinking it will be easy. This leads to underpreparation, which often leads to failure in something that person could have succeeded in with the proper preparation.

Ironically, an overabundance of doubt can lead to the exact same thing: underpreparation. Too much doubt can make a person feel like there is no hope and that trying is useless. The person may give up prematurely. At this point there really is no hope; once one has given up, he can accomplish nothing.

A person must have some certainty but also some doubt in order to obtain optimal results. For me personally, I have the certainty that God has gifted me with the ability to excel in the classroom as a student and on the football field as a quarterback. Doubt, or in this case, the realization of the possibility of failure, is what motivates me to work hard, however, I know that if I do not study for a test, I will not do well on it; and that if I do not train myself during the offseason and watch film to prepare for each opponent, my performance on Friday nights will be subpar. This combination of certainty and doubt motivates me to work hard, which ensures that I perform to the best of my ability in the classroom, on the football field, and in countless other aspects of my life.

In any situation that is not totally certain or unalterably doubtful, a blend of the two is best. The isolation of either in almost every situation leads to underpreparation and mediocre results.

TT Bertrand Russell's statement about doubt is a thoughtful idea that I wholly agree with. Doubt is not always a bad thing, it makes one think and can keep one from believing something that is utmost ridiculous.

Although William Lloyd Phelps creates a compelling argument about certainty his idea that we can "accomplish virtually anything" is propousterous. (Phelps) I agree, however, that one should find things to be certain about because sometimes seeing is not believing and other times you must believe without seeing but this does not mean you can accomplish anything. Take the book "Beloved" by Toni Morrison, for example. The main character Sethe kills her own child in order to get her away from the slavemaster

because she is certain it will save her, but the daughter only comes back to haunt Sethe even though Sethe is certain her daughter came back to forgive her. Sethe did not accomplish what she thought she might; really she is seen as unwise for believing such a thing. There is a fine line between being certain and being gullible.

To doubt, however, leaves room to consider. One may ask themselves: would this actually work? Or is there another way to accomplish this task? I believe that an intellect must first doubt before they can be certain. To be certain rushes through all thinking; you cannot be entirely certain anyway without a little doubt first. Russell believes we must "entertain our opinions with some . . . doubt." (Russell). I believe that this means we should challenge ourselves. We should take our conclusion or opinion and doubt ourselves and possibly come up with a different conclusion. A little argument or debate is healthy for us, it works our brains and challenges our thought process. However, you should not doubt everything and never believe anything is possible. There is a balance between certainty and doubt. One must exercise both to understand what really is possible to be accomplished and what is impossible.

In conclusion, doubt is good. It makes us think and grow. Certainty is not all bad. It is necessary but one can not be certain without first doubting.

RRR William Lyon Phelps and Bertrant Russel portray conflicting views regarding the importance of certainty and doubt. Phelps position is that having certainty in self allows you to accomplish insurmountable tasks. On the oter hand, Bertrand Russel beleies it is healthy to obtain a certain level of doubt in one's self, and that people should not dogmatically beleive in any philosophy. Both scholars make good points about the relationship between doubt, certainty and success, however it is a mix of the two opinions that will render the most success in one's life. You should always have certainty regarding your own capabilities, yet you should practice doubt while forming your beleifs and observing the beleifs of oters.

Having certainty in one's self is the only way to acheive your goals. Having confidence comes from having certainty. This type of confidence is seen in most athletics. Sport Pchycologist Jenna Warner wrote an article on the power of beleiving in self. She stated that the only way to perform well was to have the certainty and confidence in yourself and your abilities. Warner provided research and statistics to back her theory. Players who were in a confident frame of mind, players who had confidence and certainty in their abilities, performed drastically better. She went on to say that this certainty in one's self is what

separates olympic athletes from the rest. The article was a testament to the effects having certainty can have on personal success. It shows that the most powerful way to have confidence is to trust and be unwavering about your beliefs and capabilities.

Bertrand Russell's views on doubt will create a well rounded mind. Especially in the field of science, doubt must be practiced at all times. Very rarely are theories proven to be true, and often scholars will improve and rewrite those theories times over in order to come to the best conclusion. People are guaranteed to share different beliefs on subjects, and often not being flexible to one's own ideas will result in being viewed as stubborn, or not open minded. Doubt allows someone to view issues through the eyes of others. It allows you to think critically about situations and come to a non offensive conclusion.

In discussing the relationship between certainty and doubt, they are both equally important. Having certainty in your own capabilities allows you to have confidence and achieve your goals. Practicing doubt in the beliefs of yourself and others allows you to view issues from multiple perspectives and come to the best conclusion. Both are vital to being an honorable person who achieves success.

EEEE Certainty and Doubt are coupled together by nature, and even more so by thinking. Phelps believes that absolute certainty is necessary, while Russell believes that doubt is important to form true opinions. Doubt is truly necessary for Real learning and growth to occur, while believing only in certainty can be a hindrance.

There are many beliefs that some people hold to be certain that are not acceptable. Hitler, for example, believed that people of Jewish descent were horrible, and a disgrace. Many other people would be certain that it is "impossible" to murder six million people, but his certainty lead him to be able to do so. In a similar sense Christian crusaders in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries were certain that Rome had the right to Jerusalem. They killed thousands, and sparked a holy war, that is still not over. Americans were certain that they had the right to the entire North American continent, and that lead to terrible mistreatment and expulsion from lands for Natives. They had the trail of tears, and many countless massacres. In 1860, the southern states believed beyond

reasonable doubt, that slavery was acceptable, which lead to a war, and thousands of Americans being killed and killing each other. It is the certainty that leads to the violence. If Hitler had not been so certain that Jews were evil, then maybe six million more people could be alive today. If, a thousand years ago, the Pope hadn't believed that christians were entitled to the holy land, then maybe the twin towers would still be standing, and no soldiers would be dead in a second war in Iraq. However, no one can be certain about what has not happened.

Doubt, on the other hand, is a great learning and teaching tool. It is doubtful that Isaac Newton would have discovered the laws of gravity if he had not question what everyone else was certain of. It is hard to know whether or not Galileo and Copernicus could have created the heliocentric picture of the universe if they had not question the church. If the founding fathers had not doubted the English monarchy, then today America could still have the Queen on its money. Doubt leads to questioning, questioning to testing, and testing to understanding. Without doubt many of the scientific discoveries that are enjoyed today would be lost. People would not be working on a cure for cancer, they would just be certain its deadly. Sometimes self-doubt is the greatest. In "Lord of the Rings" Aragorn doubts himself, and yet becomes the greatest king in an age. The American—and many other—militaries are designed to make one doubt themselves and over come to. The military academies—West Point, Annapolis—thrive on making students doubt themselves, because then they can build them up from the bottom. Doubt is a piece of growth that compells people to know more. The reason atheists and agnostics exist is because of doubt. The reason the legal system exists is because of doubting that all people are inherently good. The reason militaries exist is because our doubt in our ability to handle conflicts peacefully. Doubt is a tool that is invaluable to teaching, and more importantly, to learning.

Doubt is what sparks learning, creating, growing, all while certainty just creates a mental stagnancy. The greatest Artists, thinkers, scientists of all time have had some deep doubt; where as those with certainty remained trapped in old thinking and old ways. Doubters are those who have shaped the past, the present, and will shape the future.