

# FOR TEACHERS ONLY

The University of the State of New York  
REGENTS HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATION

# ELA

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Tuesday, August 13, 2019— 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., only

### RATING GUIDE

Updated information regarding the rating of this examination may be posted on the New York State Education Department's web site during the rating period. Check this web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/> and select the link "Scoring Information" for any recently posted information regarding this examination. This site should be checked before the rating process for this examination begins and several times throughout the Regents Examination period.

The following procedures are to be used for rating papers in the Regents Examination in English Language Arts. More detailed directions for the organization of the rating process and procedures for rating the examination are included in the *Information Booklet for Scoring the Regents Examination in English Language Arts*.

## Mechanics of Rating

### Scoring the Multiple-Choice Questions

For this exam all schools must use uniform scannable answer sheets provided by the regional scanning center or large-city scanning center. **If the student's responses for the multiple-choice questions are being hand scored prior to being scanned, the scorer must be careful not to make any marks on the answer sheet except to record the scores in the designated score boxes. Marks elsewhere on the answer sheet will interfere with the accuracy of the scanning.**

Before scannable answer sheets are machine scored, several samples must be both machine and manually scored to ensure the accuracy of the machine-scoring process. All discrepancies must be resolved before student answer sheets are machine scored. When machine scoring is completed, a sample of the scored answer sheets must be scored manually to verify the accuracy of the machine-scoring process.

## Rating of Essay and Response Questions

- (1) In training raters to score student essays and responses for each part of the examination, follow the procedures outlined below:

### *Introduction to the Tasks*

- Raters read the task and summarize it.
- Raters read the passages or passage and plan a response to the task.
- Raters share response plans and summarize expectations for student responses.

### *Introduction to the Rubric and Anchor Papers*

- Trainer reviews rubric with reference to the task.
- Trainer reviews procedures for assigning holistic scores (i.e., by matching evidence from the response to the language of the rubric and by weighing all qualities equally).
- Trainer leads review of each anchor paper and commentary. (*Note:* Anchor papers are ordered from high to low within each score level.)

### *Practice Scoring Individually*

- Raters score a set of five practice papers individually. Raters should score the five papers independently without looking at the scores provided after the five papers.
- Trainer records scores and leads discussion until raters feel comfortable enough to move on to actual scoring. (Practice papers for Parts 2 and 3 only contain scores, not commentaries.)

- (2) When actual rating begins, each rater should record his or her individual rating for a student's essay and response on the rating sheets provided in the *Information Booklet*, *not* directly on the student's essay or response or answer sheet. Do *not* correct the student's work by making insertions or changes of any kind.
- (3) Both the 6-credit essay and the 4-credit response must be rated by at least two raters; a third rater will be necessary to resolve scores that differ by more than one point. **Teachers may *not* score their own students' answer papers.** The scoring coordinator will be responsible for coordinating the movement of papers, calculating a final score for each student's essay or response, and recording that information on the student's answer paper.

**Schools are not permitted to rescore any of the open-ended questions on any Regents Exam after each question has been rated the required number of times as specified in the rating guide, regardless of the final exam score. Schools are required to ensure that the raw scores have been added correctly and that the resulting scale score has been determined accurately.**



**New York State Regents Examination in English Language Arts  
Part 2 Rubric  
Writing From Sources: Argument**

	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essays at this Level:</b>	<b>Essays at this Level:</b>	<b>Essays at this Level:</b>	<b>Essays at this Level:</b>	<b>Essays at this Level:</b>	<b>Essays at this Level:</b>
<b>Content and Analysis: the extent to which the essay conveys complex ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to support claims in an analysis of the texts</b>	introduce a precise and insightful claim, as directed by the task  -demonstrate in-depth and insightful analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims	-introduce a precise and thoughtful claim, as directed by the task  -demonstrate thorough analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims	-introduce a precise claim, as directed by the task  -demonstrate appropriate and accurate analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims	-introduce a reasonable claim, as directed by the task  -demonstrate some analysis of the texts, but insufficiently distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims	-introduce a claim  -demonstrate confused or unclear analysis of the texts, failing to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims	do not introduce a claim  -do not demonstrate analysis of the texts
<b>Command of Evidence: the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided texts to support analysis</b>	-present ideas fully and thoughtfully, making highly effective use of a wide range of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis  -demonstrate proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material	-present ideas clearly and accurately, making effective use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis  -demonstrate proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material	-present ideas sufficiently, making adequate use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis  -demonstrate proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material	-present ideas briefly, making use of some specific and relevant evidence to support analysis  -demonstrate inconsistent citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material	-present ideas inconsistently and/or inaccurately, in an attempt to support analysis, making use of some evidence that may be irrelevant  -demonstrate little use of citations to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material	-present little or no evidence from the texts  -do not make use of citations
<b>Coherence, Organization, and Style: the extent to which the essay logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using formal style and precise language</b>	-exhibit skillful organization of ideas and information to create a cohesive and coherent essay  -establish and maintain a formal style, using sophisticated language and structure	-exhibit logical organization of ideas and information to create a cohesive and coherent essay  -establish and maintain a formal style, using fluent and precise language and sound structure	-exhibit acceptable organization of ideas and information to create a coherent essay  -establish and maintain a formal style, using precise and appropriate language and structure	-exhibit some organization of ideas and information to create a mostly coherent essay  -establish but fail to maintain a formal style, using primarily basic language and structure	-exhibit inconsistent organization of ideas and information, failing to create a coherent essay  -lack a formal style, using some language that is inappropriate or imprecise	-exhibit little organization of ideas and information  -are minimal, making assessment unreliable  -use language that is predominantly incoherent, inappropriate, or copied directly from the task or texts
<b>Control of Conventions: the extent to which the essay demonstrates command of conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling</b>	-demonstrate control of conventions with essentially no errors, even with sophisticated language	-demonstrate control of conventions, exhibiting occasional errors only when using sophisticated language	-demonstrate partial control of conventions, exhibiting occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension	-demonstrate emerging control of conventions, exhibiting occasional errors that hinder comprehension	-demonstrate a lack of control of conventions, exhibiting frequent errors that make comprehension difficult	-are minimal, making assessment of conventions unreliable

- An essay that addresses fewer texts than required by the task can be scored no higher than a 3.
- An essay that is a personal response and makes little or no reference to the task or texts can be scored no higher than a 1.
- An essay that is totally copied from the task and/or texts with no original student writing must be scored a 0.
- An essay that is totally unrelated to the task, illegible, incoherent, blank, or unrecognizable as English must be scored a 0.

The debate over plastic bags has been happening since they were created, with arguments ~~centered~~<sup>centered</sup> ~~around~~<sup>around</sup> the environmental effects of using and producing plastic bags. Without proper knowledge and scientific fact, it's difficult not to hold the opinion exaggerating and demonizing the reality of plastic bags. However, once all the adjectives, speculations and biases are ~~with~~ rid of, what's presented is the reality that plastic bags do little harm to the environment compared to <sup>the</sup> more "eco-friendly" options of reusable and paper bags; therefore, it's unreasonable and even harmful to ban plastic bags.

Plastic bag alternatives such as paper and synthetic bags ~~actually~~ fail to be eco-friendly, as demonstrated by their large carbon foot print, ~~and recyclability and~~ ~~biodegradability~~. According to Text 1, "a cotton bag would have to be used about 130 times in order to have a carbon foot print that is less than ~~than~~ that of a plastic bag" (line 26). With this quantitative evidence, it's implied that reusable cotton bags actually take more resources to produce, which in turn increases the amount of carbon emissions it takes to make one. What is the purpose of banning plastic bags and replacing them with reusable ones when ~~it is~~ it is more environmentally friendly to produce plastic bags? ~~Such~~ The argument for reusable bags ~~actually~~ contradicts itself in this manner; supporters advocate for <sup>the</sup> reusable option due to its speculated "eco-friendliness", yet the reality is that plastic bags are more "eco-friendly" to produce. Furthermore, "reusable plastic bags are often made of laminated plastics and are not recyclable." (text 1, line 31) Plastic bags, on the other hand, have the option of recyclability. With all the ~~the~~ faults of reusable ~~the~~ bags, it would be completely contradictory to replace plastic with reusable bags, as there isn't even an environmental benefit from switching — which is the whole point ~~of~~ of a reusable bag.

The economic effects of ~~prohibiting~~<sup>banning</sup> plastic bags would also be detrimental, as the plastic bag industry houses numerous jobs, and there would

~~would~~ be a decline of sales in stores as a result. Text 4 describes this situation very well: "The US plastic bag manufacturing and recycling sector employs more than 30,000 workers in 349 communities across the nation" (line 14). By banning plastic bags, the only effect would be a stab at the economy and a loss of thousands of jobs. Coupled with the lack of benefits from reusable bags, banning plastic bags would ~~just~~ be unnecessarily harmful. Furthermore, studies indicate that "the majority of stores surveyed ~~where~~ in areas with a [plastic bag] ban reported an overall sales decline" (text 4, line 4), likely due to the costly alternative of reusable bags. If there are no economic or environmental benefits of banning plastic bags, there is no incentive to investigate a ban and no purpose will be served, other than a jab at the economy and environment.

Moreover, it is indicated that plastic bags actually do little harm to the environment. Statistics in text 3 illustrate the reality of the situation: "plastic shopping bags [represent] less than 3% of marine litter on European beaches" (line 19). With such little harm to wildlife, why isn't the public focusing more on bigger threats ~~than~~ instead of demonizing plastic bags? The ~~entire~~ total irrationality of the situation brings so much harm to ~~the~~ the environment, contradicting the entire ~~base~~ basis of which the argument against plastic bags stands on. Banning plastic bags would help lessen litter — 3% of it — but the focus needs to be turned to the other 97% destroying wildlife and their habitats. The ban would barely scratch the surface of litter issues.

Regardless of the factual, statistical evidence provided, some contractors may still believe that banning plastic ~~bag~~ bags would do more good than bad. Text 2 argues that "the environmental balance of the waterways is being thrown off by the rate of plastic bags finding their way into the ~~mouths~~ and intestinal tracts of sea animals." (line 22).

However, most of text 2's supporting evidence is speculation, not reality; there are only a few pieces of credible evidence that ~~are~~ are provided. In addition, text 2's argument against plastic bags ~~is~~ due to environmental harm is easily disproved and rendered meaningless, as there exists "no evidence that banning bags helps the environment" (text 3, line 9), and that ~~NOAA~~ "[NOAA]... says there are currently no published studies about how many marine mammals die because of marine debris" (text 3, line 13). This ~~lack~~ "absence of evidence" (text 3, line 11) detracts from the credibility of text 2's claims, since there are no concrete studies that have been done to support its position.

This isn't to say plastic bags and plastic products in general are beneficial to the environment, but rather to illustrate the utter environmental ~~uselessness~~ and economical uselessness of instigating a plastic bag ban. Plastic, of course, is an issue — it ~~isn't~~ is not biodegradable, and the buildup of plastic does affect the environment, only not so much when in terms of wildlife. However, there do exist solutions: ~~many~~ companies and innovators have developed plastic alternatives, such as hemp plastic and the like, which are biodegradable. Solutions to the plastic problem are ~~being~~ being developed steadily. In the meantime, however, solving the plastic problem by meaninglessly and ~~mindlessly~~ mindlessly banning plastic bags would do little to serve its ~~intended~~ intended purpose of helping the environment.

## Anchor Level 6–A

The essay introduces a precise and insightful claim, as directed by the task (*what’s presented is the reality that plastic bags do little harm to the environment compared to the more “eco-friendly” options of reusable and paper bags; therefore, it’s unreasonable and even harmful to ban plastic bags*). The essay demonstrates in-depth and insightful analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim (*reusable cotton bags actually take more resources to produce ... What is the purpose of banning plastic bags and replacing them with reusable ones when it is more environmentally friendly to produce plastic bags and The economic effects of banning plastic bags would also be detrimental, as the plastic bag industry houses numerous jobs*) and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims (*Regardless of the factual, statistical evidence provided, some contractors may still believe that banning plastic bags would do more good than bad*). The essay presents ideas fully and thoughtfully, making highly effective use of a wide range of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis (*“reusable plastic bags are often made of laminated plastics and are not recyclable” and “plastic shopping bags [represent] less than 3% of marine litter on European beaches”*). The essay demonstrates proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material [*According to Text 1 ... (line 26) and (text 4, line 4)*], although only the first line of directly quoted material is identified. The essay exhibits skillful organization of ideas and information to create a cohesive and coherent essay, with an opening paragraph that clearly states the claim against banning plastic shopping bags, followed by three paragraphs that address the negative impact of banning plastic shopping bags (*If there are no economic or environmental benefits of banning plastic bags, there is no incentive to instigate a ban and no purpose will be served*) and through analysis and evidence discounts a counterclaim (*However, most of text 2’s supporting evidence is speculation, not reality; there are only a few pieces of credible evidence that are provided*), and a summative conclusion (*solving the plastic problem by meaninglessly and mindlessly banning plastic bags would do little to serve its intended purpose of helping the environment*). The essay establishes and maintains a formal style, using sophisticated language and structure (*Without proper knowledge and scientific fact, it’s difficult not to hold the opinion exaggerating and demonizing the reality of plastic bags and This “absence of evidence” ... detracts from the credibility of text 2’s claims, since there are no concrete studies that have been done to support its position*). The essay demonstrates control of conventions with essentially no errors, even with sophisticated language.

Plastic bags is an everyday commodity that is ubiquitous in every store and shop. Yet, this seemingly simple item is subject to a long and drawn out argument about whether it should be banned or not. This is due simply to the fact that plastic bags are said to damage the environment and kill living organisms. However, knowing this, why wouldn't plastic bags be already banned in every city, state and country? Well, the answer is quite complicated. You see, plastic bags are items that cause damage to the environment due to the time it takes for them<sup>to</sup> break down. But studies have shown that some, if not most, of these statements are over exaggerated and that "there's no evidence that banning bags helps the environment and plenty of evidence that it may actually hurt." (text 3 lines 9 and 10). Seeing this, one may now understand how complicated the problem is and why it is hard to reach a solid conclusion on the matter. Both sides present arguments and facts that are compelling. However, I believe that plastic bags should be banned due to their ability to damage the environment, their ability to kill marine organisms and their potential to pollute our cities and planet.

Plastic bags have the ability to damage, or severely damage, the ecosystem. According to text 2 lines 28-29, "every bag that ends up in the woodlands of the country threatens the natural progression of wildlife." This means that every plastic bag that ends up in a forest or any other ecosystem can hinder and harm the animals, and thus, disrupting the way of life for the entire ecosystem. This can then lead to another ecosystem and then another and so on and so forth, creating a domino effect that can

permanently stop the natural progression of wild life in that entire region. Furthermore, plastic bags can kill many woodland and marine organisms due to plastic bags accumulating in an ecosystem. According to text 2 lines 22-32, "the environmental balance of the waterways is being thrown off by the rate of plastic bags finding their way into the mouths and intestinal tracts of sea mammals. As one species begins to die off at an abnormal rate, every other living organism on the waterway is impacted" and that "plastic bags are responsible for suffocation deaths of woodland animals as well as inhibiting soil nutrients." Based on the textual evidence it is clear to see just how devastating plastic bags are to the environment and to animal life. Through the buildup of plastic bags within an ecosystem, not only will organisms die, but also, the land will be affected for years. The plastic bags impede the nutrients in the soil, thus prevented the growth of new flora and possibly new animal life as well.

In addition, plastic bags cause problems in our cities and pollute our planet. According to text 1 line 4, plastic bags are "clogging sewers in parts of Asia." This is a problem because the waste in sewers will accumulate and lead to growth of bacteria and germs which then leads to disease. Furthermore, plastic bags also pollute our planet. According to text 2 line 6-10, plastic bags "end up in the trash, which then ends up in the landfill or burned. Banning emits toxic gases that harm the atmosphere and increase the level of VOCs in the air while landfills hold them ~~hold them~~ indefinitely as part of the plastic waste problem throughout the globe." This means that when plastic bags are burned, the emissions created will

harm the atmosphere. Therefore, plastic bags not only harm the ecosystem and woodland life, it can also pollute our air, planet and cause problems to society.

Despite this, some people say that plastic bags shouldn't be banned. They say plastic bags don't cause as much harm as others claim. According to text lines 13-15, "The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, for one, says there are currently no published studies about how many marine mammals die because of marine debris" and that "a study from the U.K. Environmental Agency that found plastic grocery bags have the lowest environmental impact in 'human toxicity' and 'marine aquatic toxicity'" (lines 30-31). These studies suggest plastic bags actually don't have that much of a negative impact in general. However, this form of pollution does <sup>seriously</sup> damage the environment and hurts sea and land life. If a ban can prevent this type of damage, then it should be put in place.

To conclude, the debate over whether or not plastic bags should be banned is a controversial topic as both sides have evidence and logical reasons for the ban or against it. Reusing plastic bags and making efforts to recycle plastic bags can somewhat mitigate the negative effects of plastic bags on the environment. However, the best solution is to ban plastic shopping bags, <sup>in order</sup> to dramatically decrease their disastrous impact on the world.

## Anchor Level 6–B

The essay introduces a precise and insightful claim, as directed by the task (*plastic bags should be banned due to their ability to damage the environment, their ability to kill marine organisms and their potential to pollute our cities and planet*). The essay demonstrates in-depth and insightful analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim (*every plastic bag that ends up in a forest or any other ecosystem can hinder and harm the animals, and thus, hurting the way of life for the entire ecosystem* and *Based on the textual evidence it is clear to see just how devastating plastic bags are to the environment and to animal life*) and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims (*Despite this, some people say that plastic bags shouldn't be banned. They say plastic bags don't cause as much harm as others claim*). The essay presents ideas fully and thoughtfully, making highly effective use of a wide range of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis (*"every bag that ends up in the woodlands of the country threatens the natural progression of wildlife"* and *plastic bags "end up in the trash, which then ends up in the landfill or burned ... Burning emits toxic gases that harm the atmosphere"*). The essay demonstrates proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material (*According to text 2 lines 28-29* and *According to text 3 lines 13-15*). The essay exhibits skillful organization of ideas and information to create a cohesive and coherent essay, introducing both sides of the issue in the first paragraph (*plastic bags are items that cause damage to the environment ... But studies have shown that some, if not most, of these statements are over exaggerated*) and stating the claim in favor of banning plastic shopping bags. The essay then presents two paragraphs that support the claim (*plastic bags can kill many woodland and marine organisms due to plastic bags accumulating in an ecosystem and when plastic bags are burned, the emissions created will harm the atmosphere*) followed by a paragraph recognizing and refuting a counterclaim (*These studies suggest plastic bags actually don't have that much of a negative impact ... However, this form of pollution does clearly damage the environment*), and concluding with a summary paragraph (*the best solution is to ban plastic shopping bags in order to dramatically decrease their disasterous impact on the world*). The essay establishes and maintains a formal style, using sophisticated language and structure (*Both sides present arguments and facts that are compelling and the waste in sewers will accumulate and lead to the growth of bacteria and germs which then leads to disease*). The essay demonstrates control of conventions, exhibiting occasional errors (*Based on the textual evidence it is, thus prevented, midigate, disasterous*) only when using sophisticated language.

It is no hidden secret that petroleum has a huge environmental impact. When burned, petroleum can be used as a fuel ~~at~~<sup>at</sup> the cost of the release of CO<sub>2</sub>, a greenhouse gas, into the environment; ~~This would lead~~<sup>This would lead</sup> to global warming, pollution, smog, and much more. One of the biggest issues is the creation of plastic, a non-biodegradable material that is used in many products of our everyday life. Plastic is used in our clothing, school supplies, kitchen tools, gadgets, books, ~~and~~<sup>smart</sup> phones and, ~~most importantly,~~<sup>most importantly,</sup> ~~plastic~~<sup>plastic</sup> bags. Although plastic bags may seem to be harmless, they actually have a huge impact on the environment, plants and animals of the planet. Because of this, many countries have banned the use of plastic bags and instead looked ~~upon~~<sup>upon</sup> alternatives ~~instead~~. However, the use of alternatives to grocery plastic bags may cause more harm than good. ~~All~~<sup>All</sup> of which is due to the hidden secret behind the alternatives and the true nature of plastic bags.

The thought of banning plastic bags due to their environmental impact is extremely popular. ~~This idea~~<sup>This idea</sup> is expressed throughout Text 2, "The Effects of Plastic Bags" on Environment. In the text, the ~~author~~<sup>writer</sup> states that managing one's plastic bags is a difficult task that, if done carelessly, much more may occur. In ~~Text 2~~<sup>Text 2</sup> lines 11-14, the writer states "when citizens try to manage their plastic bag disposal wind plays a role in carrying them away as litter. A bag that is eventually ripped to shreds from high winds or other factors doesn't disappear but instead is spread in smaller amounts throughout the area" essentially portraying how easy it is for plastic bags to escape anyone's hands to cause harm. Later on, in Text 2, lines 19-20, the writer states "Any hunting mammal can easily mistake the size, shape, and texture of the plastic bag for a meal and find its airway is cut off." Based on this, the author shows the dangers and difficulties of mismanaged plastic bags. ~~However,~~<sup>However,</sup> this idea is false and

completely overexaggerated as it is not the actual case in real life, but rather irrational thoughts following Murphy's law. The fact is that plastic bags are not as environmentally destructive as commonly believed to be. As stated in Text 3, lines 9-10, "There's no evidence that banning bags helps the environment - and plenty of evidence that it may actually hurt." Text 3 states true facts and studies ~~dispute~~ dispute the idea that plastic bags must be banned. In text 3, it is stated that based on a study "plastic shopping bags represented less than 3% of marine litter on European beaches, a figure that includes scraps of plastic ~~from~~ from shredded bags." (lines 19-21) Later on, Text 3 states that a study made by the UK Environmental Agency stated that "plastic grocery bags have the lowest environmental impact in human footcity." (lines 30-31) "As clearly shown by Text 3, the claims made in Text 2 are extremely bogus and unrealistic.

The banning of plastic bags may seem like a good idea for all nations to follow. ~~Although~~ Although it may seem to help the environment, it may actually deteriorate it even more. This is because of the problem that comes to light when using alternatives to plastic bags. In ~~Text~~ Text 1, it is stated that alternatives may not work because they may be more inconvenient and just as or more harmful than actual plastic bags. In lines 20-21 and 23-24 of Text 1, it says "Paper shopping bags do not biodegrade ~~either~~ in a landfill either and because of their greater mass they are a greater burden on the waste stream... "Biodegradable" bags are a marketing scheme." Furthermore, in lines 26-30, it says "A cotton bag would be used about 130 times in order to have a carbon footprint that is less than that of a ~~plastic~~ plastic bag. Growing cotton requires more pesticides than most crops and processing and transport... If the plastic bag is ~~used~~ <sup>recycled</sup> to line your garbage can, a cotton bag would have to be used over 300 times to have a lower global warming potential." This shows that

alternatives to plastic bags are more damaging than plastic bags due to their usage, convenience, and production. Not only are plastic bags cheaper and easier to manufacture, but also much more environmentally friendly.

Overall, plastic bags are extremely useful tools that we use in our every day life. Although they may seem to be highly impacting the environment negatively, it is actually helping it. Most claims made against plastic bags are bogus and overly blown out of proportion to seem worse than the actual problem is. In reality, plastic bags are not the most toxic or environmentally damaging ~~man~~ made tool. Moreover, it is the only best and safe alternative as other alternatives are more damaging and expensive to make and sell. Because of this, there should not be a ban on plastic bags.

## Anchor Level 5–A

The essay introduces a precise and thoughtful claim, as directed by the task (*Although plastic bags may seem to be harmless, they actually have a huge impact ... Because of this, many countries have banned the use of plastic bags ... However, the use of alternatives to grocery plastic bags may cause more harm than good*). The essay demonstrates in-depth and insightful analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim (*The banning of plastic bags may seem like a good idea ... Although it may seem to help the environment, it may actually deteriorate it even more and This shows that alternatives to plastic bags are more damaging than plastic bags ... Not only are plastic bags cheaper and easier to manufacture, but also much more environmentally friendly*) and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims (*Based on this, the author shows the dangers and difficulties of mismanaged plastic bags. However, this idea is false and completely overexaggerated*). The essay presents ideas clearly and accurately, making effective use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis (*the writer states “Any hunting mammal can easily mistake the size, shape, and texture of the plastic bag for a meal and find its airway is cut off” and text 3 states that a study ... stated that “plastic grocery bags have the lowest environmental impact in ‘human toxicity’”*). The essay demonstrates proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material (*Text 2, lines 19-20 and Text 3, lines 9-10*). The essay exhibits skillful organization of ideas and information to create a cohesive and coherent essay, with an introduction that presents the concerns surrounding the use of plastic in general and a claim based on the misconceptions of alternatives to plastic bag usage, followed by one body paragraph that addresses an *extremely popular* counterclaim that plastic bags have a major *environmental impact* and then refutes it (*The fact is that plastic bags are not as environmentally destructive as commonly believed to be*), and a second body paragraph that focuses on the *problem that comes to light when using alternatives to plastic bags*, with a conclusion that summarizes the main arguments and clarifies the claim (*Because of this, there should not be a ban on plastic bags*). The essay establishes and maintains a formal style, using fluent and precise language and sound structure (*When burned, petroleum can be used as a fuel at the cost of the release of CO<sub>2</sub>, a greenhouse gas, into the environment*). The essay demonstrates control of conventions, exhibiting occasional errors (*destructive, they ... it, seem worst than, bags ... it is*) only when using sophisticated language.

The argument of whether or not to ban plastic bags from being used in stores is a very heated topic. Those who have not researched the other options, or actually looked at the harm they create, may say that banning plastic bags is a good step in the right direction for saving our planet. However, the damage that banning plastic bags can create may be greater than the current damage caused by using plastic bags. Therefore, plastic bags should not be banned because the alternative options often create an even bigger problem.

Plastic bags are both economic and good for the economy. They are often reused by customers which saves them money by not having to buy bags for other purposes. The many secondary uses for plastic bags are listed in lines 37 and 38 of Text 1 which mentions how they can be "reused for the next trip to the grocery store, or for lining garbage bins, or for collecting garbage in a car, or for picking up after pets, or for covering food in the fridge." This quote shows some of the many other uses of plastic bags that cannot simply be replaced by paper or reusable bags. Besides consumers saving money by reusing them, plastic bags are also good for both business owners and employees. They are cheap and easy for store owners to buy and when stores were surveyed before and after a ban, most of the stores with the ban lost sales while those "without a ban reported an overall sales growth of 90%" (Text 4 lines 4-7). Lastly, the use of plastic bags

helps with employment as well. According to Text 4, lines 14 and 15, "The U.S. plastic bag manufacturing and recycling sector employs more than 30,000 workers in 349 communities across the nation."

However, many activists demand a ban on plastic bags and insist on the exclusive use of reusable or paper bags. As good of a plan as this may seem, these alternatives are not as good for the environment and may create more harm to the ecosystem than plastic bags. This is supported by Text 1, lines 20 and 21, that says, "Paper shopping bags do not biodegrade in a landfill either and because of their greater mass they are a greater burden on the waste stream." Furthermore, reusable bags are not a realistic fix either. "Consumers would have to use a cotton bag 173 times before they match the energy savings of one plastic bag" (Text 3 lines 38-39). Since reusable bags need to be cleaned often and may rip, it is unreasonable to expect that every customer uses their reusable bag almost 200 times before losing it, breaking it, or getting a new one. Overall, plastic bags generally have the same or less of an impact than some of its alternatives.

Despite the evidence presented by those in favor of not banning plastic bags, some may still believe that plastic bags are harmful to animals and people. However, a study from a U.K. Environment

Agency found that plastic grocery bags have the lowest environmental impact in 'human toxicity' and 'marine aquatic toxicity' as well as 'global warming potential' (Text 3 lines 30-32). This same text, in lines 14 through 16, disputes the argument that plastic bags hurt animals when it states The National Oceanic and atmospheric Administration says "there are currently no published studies about how many marine mammals die because of marine debris". As far as plastic bags being harmful to people, lines 27 and 28 state that "organizations like the Environmental Protection Agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Pacific Northwest National Labs show these claims are false or exaggerated".

Overall, plastic bags should not be banned because the cost is not greater than the reward. Plastic bags have many uses besides holding groceries, many of which cannot be replaced by paper or cotton bags. In addition, plastic bags are less harmful to wildlife and humans than we thought.

## Anchor Level 5–B

The essay introduces a precise and thoughtful claim, as directed by the task (*However, the damage that banning plastic bags can create may be greater than the current damage caused by using plastic bags. Therefore, plastic bags should not be banned because the alternative options often create an even bigger problem*). The essay demonstrates thorough analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim (*This quote shows some of the many other uses of plastic bags that cannot simply be replaced by paper or reusable bags and As good of a plan as this may seem, these alternatives are not as good for the environment and may create more harm to the ecosystem than plastic bags*) and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims (*However, many activists demand a ban on plastic bags and insist on the exclusive use of reusable or paper bags and Despite the evidence presented by those in favor of not banning plastic bags, some may still believe that plastic bags are harmful to animals and people*). The essay presents ideas clearly and accurately, making effective use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis (*The many secondary uses for plastic bags are listed in ... Text 1 which mentions how they can be “reused for the next trip to the grocery store ... or for covering food in the fridge” and However, a study from a U.K. Environment Agency found that “plastic grocery bags have the lowest environmental impact in ‘human toxicity’ ... as well as ‘global warming potential’*”). The essay demonstrates proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material [(*lines 37 and 38 of Text 1*) and (*Text 3 lines 30-32*)]. The essay exhibits logical organization of ideas and information to create a cohesive and coherent essay, with an opening paragraph that introduces a claim opposing a ban of plastic bags, followed by one paragraph that discusses their positive economic impact (*Besides consumers saving money by reusing them, plastic bags are also good for both business owners and employees*), and two body paragraphs that present and refute counterclaims that focus on the alternatives to plastic bags (*Overall, plastic bags generally have the same or less impact than ... alternatives*) and the harmful effects on *animals and people* (*This same text ... disputes the argument that plastic bags hurt animals and As far as plastic bags being harmful to people ... these claims are false*), with a conclusion that reiterates the claim and offers a brief summation. The essay establishes and maintains a formal style, using fluent and precise language and sound structure (*Furthermore, reusable bags are not a realistic fix either*). The essay demonstrates control of conventions, exhibiting occasional errors (*buy and, every customer ... their, bags ... it’s*) only when using sophisticated language.

Over the course of the last couple of decades, companies and stores have been fighting activists who want to ban plastic bags. These companies claim that plastic bags do not have a large environmental impact and banning them would be expensive and pointless. However, plastic bags continue to pollute waterways and kill innocent animals. While companies are more concerned with how much money they make than the health of the planet they live on, activists are still working to help the environment in any way they can. This includes trying to get plastic bags banned. If people keep using plastic bags, they are going to have an exponentially negative affect on the planet. This is why plastic bags should be banned in all cities.

Although plastic bags are actually entirely recyclable, very few are ever recycled. "Only 5.2% of plastic bags are recycled (text 4, lines 47-48)." In addition to that, "less than 1% of all bags sent to recycling plants world wide end up in the recycling project (text 2, lines 45-46)." If so few plastic bags are being recycled, ~~the~~ is the fact that they are recyclable even relevant? For an object to ~~the~~ claim it is environmentally friendly just because it is recyclable doesn't change the fact that it practically never gets recycled. That claim is meaningless unless it is acted on, which it so rarely is. Not only that, but plastic bags are expensive to recycle and often get caught in the machines. Some cities even have to pay to clean up all the plastic bags and to fix the problems they are causing (text 3, lines 4-5). Would they need

to be cleaned up if they were being recycled, or even reused? No, and that is exactly why it doesn't really matter that plastic bags are recyclable. They are hardly ever actually recycled.

~~Plastic~~ Plastic bags are also very bad for the environment. When they aren't recycled, they become a form of pollution. First, they end up in waterways. Second, they are blown around by the wind, which could cause them to land anywhere. From there, they get caught in trees or just land on the ground. They could ~~also~~ also end up in sewer systems. Plastic bags are everywhere, and they really shouldn't be. "300 million plastic bags end up in the Atlantic Ocean alone (text 2, lines 17-18)." It's no secret that once they're in the water, sea turtles and other marine animals can mistake them for food and eat them. Plastic bags are very bad for an animal to eat, any kind of animal. They can get stuck in the digestive tract or they can clog the airways of animals that inhaled them.

Companies claim that banning plastic bags is not energy efficient (text 3, lines 35-40). Is ~~being~~ being energy efficient truly more important than animals' lives? If banning plastic bags saves ~~the~~ the life of even one animal, will it not have been worth it? There are several cities that have already implemented this plastic bag ban, and other cities should follow. The use of plastic

bags is not efficient and it is not environmentally friendly. Through banning plastic bags, people hope to make a difference and help heal the environment that has been damaged by plastic pollution.

**Anchor Level 5-C**

The essay introduces a precise claim, as directed by the task (*If people keep using plastic bags, they are going to have an exponentially negative affect on the planet. This is why plastic bags should be banned in all cities*). The essay demonstrates thorough analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim (*For an object to claim it is environmentally friendly just because it is recyclable doesn't change the fact that it practically never gets recycled and Its no secret that once they're in the water, sea turtles and other marine animals can mistake them for food*) and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims (*These companies claim that plastic bags do not have a large environmental impact and Although plastic bags are actually entirely recyclable ... That claim is meaningless unless it is acted on*). The essay presents ideas clearly and accurately, making effective use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis (*In addition to that, "less than 1% of all bags sent to recycling plants world wide end up in the recycling project and Plastic bags are everywhere ... "300 million plastic bags end up in the Atlantic Ocean alone"*). The essay demonstrates proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material [(text 4, lines 47-48) and (text 2, lines 17-18)]. The essay exhibits acceptable organization of ideas and information to create a coherent essay, with an introduction that presents the issue and states a claim in favor of banning plastic bags, followed by one body paragraph that refutes the counterclaim that focuses on recycling and a second body paragraph that focuses on plastic bags being *bad for the environment*, and a conclusion that leads to a reaffirmation of the claim (*Through banning plastic bags, people hope to make a difference and help heal the environment that has been damaged by plastic pollution*). The essay establishes and maintains a formal style, using precise and appropriate language and structure (*If so few plastic bags are being recycled, is the fact that they are recyclable even relevant? and No, and that is exactly why it doesn't really matter that plastic bags are recyclable*). The essay demonstrates control of conventions, exhibiting occasional errors [45-46)."; layd; can get ... can clog ... that inhaled] only when using sophisticated language.

There has been a heated debate over whether or not plastic bags should be banned and it has sparked much controversy. People who support this claim say plastic bags cannot be recycled and are environmentally-unfriendly. Others who oppose the claim say it is not an environmental problem and banning them will have little to no effect. I agree with the claim that plastic bags should be banned. Plastic bags add to pollution, harm marine wildlife, and it cannot be recycled.

One reason that plastic bags should be banned is because they add to pollution. It states in text 1, lines 7-8, "... bags being made from oil, a non-renewable resource, the plastic being non-biodegradable," plastic bags are made from a non-renewable resource and cannot be broken down, which makes it harder to get rid of and adds to pollution. Likewise, it states in text 2, line 8, "Burning emits toxic gases that harm the atmosphere and increase the level of VOCs ..." To make matters worse, when burned; it creates toxic gases and pollutes the air. But it's not only pollution, it cannot be recycled.

Another reason plastic bags should be banned is because it cannot be recycled properly. In text 4, lines 50-51, it states, "It's been reported that when people put plastic bags in their curbside bin, it's has the potential to clog machines at the recycling facilities." Plastic bags can't be recycled properly and cannot even be processed through recycling.

machines. In addition, it states in text 2, lines 44-45, "Yet funding for the upgrades just has not happened, and thus less than 1% of all bags sent to recycling plants world wide end up in the recycling project." Only less than 1% of plastic bags that are sent to be recycled are actually recycled. Others would say otherwise and that plastic bags shouldn't be banned.

Opponents would disagree with the claim that plastic bags should be banned because it has little to no effect by banning plastic bags. In text 3, lines 10-11, "Bans yield little benefit to wildlife while increasing carbon emissions and other unhealthy environmental effects." Banning plastic bags will take a lot of time and effort but will have disadvantages on the environment. In text 3, lines 19-20, it states, "The study found plastic shopping bags represented less than 3% of marine litter..." Plastic bags make up the minority of marine waste. However, plastic bags have caused many other problems. Plastic bags have added on to pollution, harmed wildlife, and it cannot be recycled. Banning bags would be more beneficial than not banning them.

I agree that plastic bags should be banned because of its disadvantages on the environment. Others may say it may be worse trying to get rid of them so they shouldn't

be banned. But if plastic bags stay, they will eventually destroy the environment. There are more benefits to the environment by banning plastic bags. Thus, plastic bags should be banned because of all the harm and toxins it would give to the environment and wildlife if it stayed.

---

**Anchor Level 4–A**

The essay introduces a precise claim, as directed by the task (*I agree with the claim that plastic bags should be banned. Plastic bags add to pollution, harm marine wildlife, and it cannot be recycled*). The essay demonstrates appropriate and accurate analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim (*Plastic bags are made from a non-renewable resource and cannot be broken down, which makes it harder to get rid of and adds to pollution and Plastic bags can't be recycled properly and cannot even be processed through recycling machines*) and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims (*Opponents would disagree with the claim that plastic bags should be banned because it has little to no effect by banning plastic bags*). The essay presents ideas sufficiently, making adequate use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis (*"Burning emits toxic gases that harm the atmosphere"* and *"less than 1% of all bags sent to recycling plants world wide end up in the recycling project"*). The essay demonstrates proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material (*in text 1, lines 7-8 and in text 2, line 8*). The essay exhibits acceptable organization of ideas and information to create a coherent essay, first introducing the issue of banning plastic shopping bags and a claim favoring the ban, followed by two paragraphs of support that expound on the reasons for a ban (*To make matters worse, when burned; it creates toxic gases and pollutes the air*) and a paragraph addressing a counterclaim (*Plastic bags make up the minority of marine waste. However, plastic bags have caused many other problems*) concluding with a summation (*Thus, plastic bags should be banned because of all the harm and toxins*). The essay establishes and maintains a formal style, using precise and appropriate language and structure (*One reason that plastic bags should be banned is because they add to pollution and But if plastic bags stay, they will eventually destroy the environment*). The essay demonstrates control of conventions, exhibiting the repeated error in agreement (*Plastic bags ... and it*) and one repeated misspelling (*environment*) only when using sophisticated language.

When it comes to banning plastic bags, society, as a whole begins, to look at the environmental factors that will be affected. However, most of the claims and "statistics" we look at, are actually quite false. Banning plastic bags would barely have a positive nor negative effect on the environment. Why waste money that could be invested elsewhere on something as pointless as banning a plastic bag?

Plastic bags have been around for a very long time. Getting rid of them now won't be any good - at this point. They're not biodegradable and it already takes years - for just one to turn into shreds. However, the bag's non-biodegradable qualities is actually good for the environment. "Disposable bags are made of high-density polyethylene, which is manufactured from ethylene derived either from petroleum or natural gas... modern landfills are designed to have a low oxygen environment to prevent biodegradation that would result in the formation of methane..." (Text 1, lines 10-16). The "negative impact" people assumes the bags to have is actually prevented by landfills. Even though such landfills are seen as eye-sores.

~~Although~~ Although, pollution isn't too much of an issue with these bags; plastic bags have been known to be harmful, to wildlife. "Every bag that ends up in the woodlands of the country threatens the natural progression of wildlife... Throughout the world plastic bags are responsible for suffocation deaths of woodland animals..." (Text 2, Lines 28-32). Animals can unintentionally eat these bags; thinking that they were a source of food. Not realizing how harmful this "food source" would be to them. This not only happens to forest and woodland animals, but marine life as well.

"But there's no evidence that banning bags helps the environment -

and plenty of evidence that it may actually hurt. Bans yield little benefit to wildlife while increasing carbon emissions and other unhealthy environmental effects." (Text 3, Lines 9-11)." There is no solid proof that these bans on plastic bags are truly helpful. Official organizations, such as NOAA, the EPA, and the CDC, have backed the fact that there is no evidence. "The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, for one, says ~~there~~ there are currently no published studies about how many marine mammals die because of marine debris." (Text 3, Lines 13-15)." The so-called "claims" we hear about ~~no~~ plastic bags being seriously harmful to animals are not true. Most are made from speculation rather than actual studies being conducted. Society is so ready to jump and say something is bad for the environment without looking at the real facts; and the dangers alternative options come with.

Alternatives to plastic bags, such as paper bags + reusable bags, are actually more harmful. "Paper shopping bags do not biodegrade in a landfill either, and because of their greater mass they are a greater burden on the waste stream. Paper manufacture is an energy intensive process and requires the use of many chemicals." (Text 1, Lines 20-22)." Along with paper manufacture, almost the same amount of chemicals goes into the production of other reusable bags. These alternatives are supposed to help the environment; not harm it further.

With harmful, rather than helpful, alternatives, the ban on plastic bags is a lose-lose situation. It would be very useless to put funding towards banning an item that doesn't cost much to make, yet provides many jobs at the same time. Instead of banning them, we need to work to find ways to better recycle these

bags into something more useful - once their one-use life cycle is over.

**Anchor Level 4-B**

The essay introduces a precise claim, as directed by the task (*Banning plastic bags would barely have a positive nor negative effect on the environment. Why waste money that could be invested elsewhere on something as pointless as banning a plastic bag?*). The essay demonstrates appropriate and accurate analysis of the texts, as necessary to support the claim (*The “negative impact” people assumes the bags to have is actually prevented by landfills*) and to distinguish the claim from alternate or opposing claims (*The so-called “claims” we hear about plastic bags being seriously harmful to animals are not true. Most are made from speculation rather than actual studies being conducted*). The essay presents ideas sufficiently, making adequate use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis (*“Disposable bags are made of high-density polyethylene, which is manufactured from ethylene derived either from petroleum or natural gas ... modern landfills are designed to have a low oxygen environment to prevent biodegradation”* and *“Paper shopping bags do not biodegrade in a landfill either and because of their greater mass they are a greater burden on the waste stream”*). The essay demonstrates proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material [*Text 3, Lines 13-15*] and [*Text 1, Lines 20-22*]. The essay exhibits acceptable organization of ideas and information to create a coherent essay by first introducing the claim, then following with a paragraph that reinforces the claim (*Getting rid of them now won’t be any good - at this point*), a paragraph that addresses the danger to wildlife and one that focuses on a counterclaim, then concluding with a summative paragraph (*Instead of banning them, we need to work to find ways to better recycle these bags into something more useful - once their one-use life cycle is over*). The essay establishes and maintains a formal style, using precise and appropriate language and structure (*This not only happens to forest and woodland animals, but marine life as well*). The essay demonstrates partial control of conventions, exhibiting occasional errors (*begins, to; its; landfills. Even; CDC; have; speculation*) that do not hinder comprehension.

The idea of banning plastic bags has been very controversial. Many people believe that plastic bags should be banned while others believe the opposite. There are many reasons that prove that banning plastic bags will bring positive outcomes.

One reason of ~~the~~ why plastic bags should be banned is that it's a major source of pollution and toxic substances. For example, "There's no question that plastic bags are a symbol of our throw away culture and are an inviting target for scorn, because they are a visible sign of pollution." (Text 1, lines 1-2). This shows how pollution is a visible negative outcome of having plastic bags. Another example is, "Burning emits toxic gases that harm the atmosphere and increase the level of VOCs ..." (Text 2, line 8). This proves that the toxic substances being released are affecting the atmosphere. Without pollution and toxic substances, the environment and atmosphere will be much more better and healthy.

Another reason plastic bags should be banned is because they are dangerous for sea life and different mammals. For example; "Any hunting mammal can easily mistake the size, shape, and texture of the plastic bag for a meal and find it's airway is cut off" (Text 2, lines 19-20). This shows how plastic bags are leading to many deaths of mammals. If plastic bags were banned, mammals wouldn't be in danger nor will the sea life.

Many argue that ~~for~~ plastic bags shouldn't be banned because it's inexpensive and hold more than any other bag. But, cleaning after the bags and fixing damages are

much more expensive. For Example, "They argue that cities must spend vast sums to clean up the bags and the damages caused by them..." (Text 3, lines 4-5). It may be cheap for + affordable for the consumers, but ~~as~~ the outcome requires sums of money to fix. Without the plastic bags, that money can be spent better elsewhere.

Plastic bags should be banned because it's harming the environment and atmosphere, it's leading to the death of mammals, and it's repair cost is very high. Without plastic bags, everything will change to good.

Anchor Level 4-C

The essay introduces a reasonable claim, as directed by the task (*There are many reasons that prove that banning plastic bags will bring positive outcomes*). The essay demonstrates some analysis of the texts (*This proves that the toxic substances being released are affecting the atmosphere and This shows how plastic bags are leading to many deaths of mammals*) but insufficiently distinguishes the claim from alternate or opposing claims (*Many argue that plastic bags shouldn't be banned because it's inexpensive and hold more than any other bag*). The essay presents ideas sufficiently, making adequate use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis (*"There's no question that plastic bags are a symbol of our throw away culture and are an inviting target for scorn, because they are a visible sign of pollution"* and *"Any hunting mammal can easily mistake the size, shape, and texture of the plastic bag for a meal and find it's airway is cut off"*). The essay demonstrates proper citation of sources to avoid plagiarism when dealing with direct quotes and paraphrased material [(Text 2, line 8) and (Text 3, lines 4-5)]. The essay exhibits acceptable organization of ideas and information to create a coherent essay, first introducing the claim, then following with two body paragraphs supporting the claim (*One reason of why plastic bags should be banned is that it's a major source of pollution and toxic substances and they are dangerous for sea life and different mammals*) and a paragraph addressing the counterclaim, ending with a summative conclusion (*Plastic bags should be banned because it's harming the environment and atmosphere, it's leading to the death of mamals, and it's repair cost is very high*). The essay establishes and maintains a formal style, using precise and appropriate language and structure (*It may be affordable for the consumers, but the outcome requires sums of money to fix. Without the plastic bags, that money can be spent better elsewhere*). The essay demonstrates partial control of conventions, exhibiting occasional errors (*conterversial, of why, vissible, much more better, bags ... it's*) that do not hinder comprehension.