



thinkprep

**2020**

**AP<sup>®</sup>**

**ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE &  
COMPOSITION**

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## ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

Time—45 minutes

The following letter was written by Eugene Debs, the founder of the Socialist Party of America, on behalf of fellow labor activist Tom Mooney. In 1916, Mooney was convicted for his role in a bomb attack in San Francisco, California. While in prison for the crime of sedition, Debs wrote this letter in response to an invitation to speak on Mooney's behalf. Read the letter carefully and write a well-developed essay that analyzes the rhetorical strategies Debs uses to defend Mooney.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that analyzes the writer's rhetorical choices.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain the relationship between the evidence and your thesis.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Brother Elmgreen:—

There is nothing in my power that I would not gladly do to free Tom Mooney. He is absolutely innocent

Line There is not a question about it. He is the victim of the  
5 most infamous conspiracy in American history, and his conviction was and is a burning disgrace to our courts and a damning crime against justice.

I know Tom Mooney intimately. He is clean and true to the core of his big heart. There is not a blemish  
10 upon his manhood. And that is precisely the cause of his shameless persecution by the political highbinders of the plundering plutocracy of the Pacific coast, every one of whom, if justice were done, would be keeping the lockstep in penitentiary.

15 But fouler and more treacherous and degenerate than even these are the so-called labor leaders and trade unionists in California and elsewhere who for the paltry pelf there is in it for them, are in alliance, openly or otherwise, with the profiteering pirates and the political  
20 and judicial hirelings, to redden their hands and blacken their souls in the blood of a fellow unionist who is too rigidly honest to betray the working class and too courageous and conscientious to yield to threat and intimidation.

25 I shall not be able to attend the national labor congress to be held at Chicago in behalf of Tom Mooney and Warren Billings, beginning on January 14, but my heart will be there, and if the labor movement of  
30 the United States is true to itself and as true to Mooney and Billings as they have been to it, no effort will be spared to secure the unconditional freedom of these tried and trusted union men. The labor movement can

afford to go to any length to accomplish this end. it cannot afford to stop short of it. The labor movement  
35 is itself on trial in this cause, and if it proves cowardly and craven in the presence of its supreme task it ought to perish, for it is not fit to live. If the American labor movement cannot or will not defend its bravest defenders, it brands itself with cowardice and infamy  
40 and cannot escape its self-imposed ignominious fate.

But I shall believe otherwise. I shall have faith that the delegates assembled at Chicago will rise to complete the stature of union men and demand and insist upon the unconditional release of the innocent  
45 victims of the California conspiracy of the silk-hatted would-be murderers, and if all entreaties are in vain and all measures fail, then as a last resort let a general strike be ordered and the industries of the nation paralyzed from end to end by an outraged working class  
50 determined upon rebuking crime and securing justice.

The cowardly Governor of California, tool of the corporations that he is, will do nothing. The courts of California, debauched to the last degree, will do nothing. Therefore the working class and the common  
55 people and all who sympathize with them must take this matter into their own hands and fearlessly meet the issue by stopping the wheels of industry long enough to compel the financial bandits and their mercenaries to realize that the honest workers have some rights they  
60 are bound to respect.

The life of Tom Mooney and his equally innocent associates are more to us and to humanity than all the industrial profits of the ruling class.

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

At this convention let the capitalists of America be  
65 reminded in terms they will not misunderstand that the  
working people are not forgetting that the late war, from  
beginning to end, according to the capitalist themselves  
who shouted it from the housetops, was waged for the  
purpose of putting an end to barbarism and brutality,  
70 promoting the cause of humanity and a higher  
civilization, and making the world safe for democracy  
and justice.

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**



## End of Section 2

Please make sure that you have written or typed your 8-digit AP ID and your initials on the top of each page you will be submitting.

Congratulations on finishing your exam!  
Expect to receive feedback  
within 48 hours.



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