

### Sample H

[1] We have come a long way since women gained voting rights. Yet we have not gone for enough as gender equality remains an issue unresolved. The glass ceiling remains unbroken and women continue to fight on all fronts for rights they deserve, rights that should be inherent. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in her speech to the women graduating from Mount Holyoke College emphasizes the need to continue this struggle and strife for gender equality. By contrasting hypotheticals and reality, providing examples and personal anecdotes, and strong repetition of the word “persevere,” Albright successfully conveys her message to these graduates that they must continue to fight for rights in the face of opposition, and that they will succeed.

[2] Albright begins by presenting her audience with America’s accomplishments and continued work in this growing world. She states the past, “the Berlin Wall is now a memory”, then a hypothetical, “We could be satisfied with that,” and then America’s continued work, “creating a future” and building world peace. This powerful form of presenting what has been accomplished then a hypothetical paired with reality is a powerful way to allude to the idea that accomplishing is not enough, we must never stop trying to get better. Without the hypothetical, her statements engender awe and pride in her audience for the progress of America wants. Albright wants her audience to understand that this continued effort is optional, we could be enjoying our technological advancements while ignoring the world. By adding the hypothetical she forces her audience to acknowledge the America is going above and beyond something hard to do but accomplishable. Albright does not do this once. She does it five times. The Berlin Wall, nuclear weapons, Bosnia, a World economy, and last but not least Women’s right: She includes Women Rights last to reveal that this urge to push onwards is not confined to America but to also her audience, a class of women with the potential to bring about change. With this series of contrast between hypothetical and reality, the audience, a class of women cannot help but nod their heads in understanding that this could them, spearheading the continued struggle for gender equality in a relentless manner.

[3] Albright, having gotten the gears in the minds of the audience turning on what they maybe can do regarding Women’s rights, follows up with a series of person anecdotes of what women across the world are doing. Women in Sarajevo that she personally met are reaching across ethnic lines. Women in Burundi reach out to prevent another Rwandan genocide. Women in Guatemala; Burma. One might think that these examples serve a minor effect but in fact these anecdotes are very powerful. Being the Secretary of State, Albright is an imposing figure in the eyes of her audience and they know her anecdotes are stories of unforgettable encounters and experiences of a strong woman. The personal feel brought by Albright sends a message to her audience that this is real, a movement is happening women are stepping across the globe. Even better? Albright selected nations going through conflict and devastation and Women rising from the shattered remnants from society is a story that brings her audience

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tears, tears of joy and pride knowing that fellow women were standing up to injustices everywhere. More importantly, the hidden feeling conjuring up in the minds of the audience is, if they can do it we can too! These anecdotes are like the stories of the underaged, the poor and oppressed rising to make a difference, anecdotes that strike home within the hearts of the women sitting and listening to Albright's speech.

[4] Having brought forth the continued struggle for women's rights and enlightening her audience with their potential by showing them the acts of others like them, Albright begins her final push for action. She knows that these graduates, in their struggle for equality, will face resistance, ridicule, distraction. Some will concede others will struggle onwards with diminished fervor. Overcoming these roadblocks are tough but Albright pushes onward and drills into the minds of these future activists that they must persevere. Ending each paragraph with "and persevere" after speaking of all the opposition and taunts that they may face, Albright successfully relates the idea of perseverance with opposition in the minds of the graduates. Walking away from college, they will remember to persevere in the face of opposition, that perseverance is the key to continued struggle. This link is solidified through Albright's repetition and there will be little opposition these graduates will not be able to overcome in the future. In addition, she states "if you aim high enough"...before every description of opposition as if she is challenging her audience to aim higher. This repetition of a challenge is something the graduates cannot walk away from, as every time she repeats "if you aim high enough," her audience looks inwards and questions themselves as to whether or not they will push harder and aim higher. And of course after hearing America's continued work and the struggle of women abroad, the graduates say to themselves "yes." It is this "yes" that Albright wants, a "yes" that confirms to each audience member that they will fight for gender equality, a yes that symbolized the beginning of an endless journey to achievements in the face of opposition.

[5] Albright's commencement speech successfully drives home the will to fight for gender equality among her audience by showing them that they can always push harder, that others are already in the fray, and that the path is hard and is a challenge that you may partake in. And partake they will as they walk away from the ceremony ready to challenge societal ideas and fight for gender equality among all walks of life.

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6/6 Points (A1 – B4 – C1)

**Row A: 1/1**

The response earned a point for Row A because it clearly articulates a thesis with a defensible position about the rhetorical choices the writer makes: “By contrasting hypotheticals and reality, providing examples and personal anecdote, and strong repetition of the word ‘persevere’, Albright successfully conveys her message to these graduates that they must continue the fight for rights in the face of opposition and that they will succeed.”

**Row B: 4/4**

The response earned four points for Row B because it successfully integrates evidence throughout to support the analysis and the commentary connects consistently to the thesis. In paragraph two, the response addresses Albright’s choice to evoke the past – in this case, “the Berlin Wall” – but then examines her use of a hypothetical to challenge that past, “we could be satisfied with that.” This rhetorical choice becomes the focus of the response’s analysis and explicitly connects to the thesis and Albright’s message that “perseverance can make a difference.” The response further analyzes Albright’s rhetoric by suggesting that her language “allude[s] to the idea that accomplishing is not enough, we must never stop trying to get better.” Paragraph three focuses on Albright’s use of “person[al] anecdotes of what women across the world are doing.” The commentary within this paragraph is thoughtful and consistently supports the argument that if these “fellow women were standing up to injustices...we can too!” References to “Women in Sarajevo,” “Women in Burundi,” and “Women in Guatemala,” highlight that women everywhere are involved in a “movement” that showcases how “women are stepping across the globe.” The response recognizes and explains how these examples demonstrate Albright’s message about the pursuit of gender equality. Paragraph four then becomes a general commentary on the choices Albright made throughout her speech and how those choices combine to convey her message. Looking specifically at choices related to the organization of her speech, the response skillfully examines her repetition of “perseverance” coupled with her repeated “if you aim high enough” followed by description of an opposition challenging her audience to aim higher. The line of reasoning, present throughout, is explicitly stated in the concluding paragraph: “Albright’s commencement speech successfully drives home the will to fight for gender equality among her audience by showing them that they can always push harder, that others are already in the fray, and that the path is hard and is a challenge that you may partake in.”

**Row C: 1/1**

The response earned a point for Row C because it explains the significance of the writer’s rhetorical choices. In paragraph one, the response presents a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation: “The glass ceiling remains unbroken and women continue to fight on all fronts for rights they deserve, rights that should be inherent.” In paragraph four, the response

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recognizes the implications of the text in recognizing Albright's call for action: "She knows that these graduates, in their struggle for equality, will face resistance, ridicule, distraction...Walking away from college, they will remember to persevere in the face of opposition, that perseverance is the key to continued struggle."

### Sample A

[1] In her 1997 commencement speech to Mount Holyoke College, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright connects with her audience through parallel syntax, repetition, assertions and other tactics to convince her audience that they have an opportunity to change the world and break through the glass ceilings around them.

[2] Albright starts her speech on a national and personal state, comparing how “they” as individuals “must choose how to lead their life, to the larger America who “as a nation” must choose “how to shape history.” Through parallel syntax, relating what she knows as Secretary of State, to what her audience knows, as individuals. Albright continues her description of America all the while in parallel syntax claiming that “We could be satisfied” or “We could relax” or multiple more clauses each accompanied with a unifying “we,” to make her audience feel like part of the discussion, as well as a clause claiming that “instead we are pursuing broader prosperity” or “renewing our commitment.” Albright’s echoing syntax rings out in the manner of King’s “I have a dream” speech, each repetition relating her claims back to her central statement of unity and opportunity, each ring drawing in her listeners.

[3] Now Albright transitions from America to women. She follows the same verse-refrain form which at this point her audience has begun to chant on their heads. She described women who “could now lower [their] voices” but “instead,” “[bump] against a glass ceiling” or “[rise] from a dirt floor.” Albright has referenced the U.S., how it has refused to give in, and how it has found prosperity, and now she reflects that structure onto women. Her audience begins to believe that soon, if my con[ILLEGIBLE] to fight, they will reach prosperity.

[4] Albright now shifts again, this time her syntax morphs into an new echo, once which describes women “in Burundi” or “in Guatemala” or “in Burma.” She shows the women across the globe and their efforts to reach prosperity in an almost musical rhythm. She then finds a new term which she will echo for the rest of her speech: “each has persevered.” First she quotes Robert Kennedy, a man beloved by a nation, in saying “if there’s nobody in your way, it’s because you’re not going anywhere.” She quickly follows this with a claim that the listener must “persevere.” Through this quote and repetition, she has touched the hearts of her listeners and cemented an idea, the idea of perseverance. She continues to offer examples of hardships and that the listener must “persevere” to overcome them, in the same structure as before: example, refrain, example, refrain. Her diction: “There is no doubt,” “It is certain,” “Inevitably” conveys [sic] that she is an authority on the subject, so when she tells her audience to “persevere,” they act without questioning.

[5] She closes her speech by telling her audience that they will face hardship, but they will overcome. Even if at this point they don’t believe her, through her repetition they have been classically conditioned much like Pavlov’s dog, to instantly think “persevere” whenever a

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hardship arises. And thus Albright has used rhetoric to inspire and protect a graduating class of women.

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**Sample A**

**4/6 Points (A1 – B3 – C0)**

**Row A: 1/1**

The response earned a point for Row A because it provides a one-sentence, defensible thesis that establishes analytical categories for Albright’s rhetorical choices: “...Secretary of State Madeleine Albright connect with her audience through parallel syntax, repetition, assertions and other tactics to convince her audience that they have an opportunity to change the world and break through the glass ceilings around them.”

**Row B: 3/4**

The response earned three points for Row B because the evidence relates to the thesis. However, the response only explains how some of the evidence connects to the line of reasoning. In paragraph two, the response examines how Albright creates a comparison between her audience and the rest of America, “comparing how ‘they’ as individuals ‘must choose how to lead their life,’ to the larger America who ‘as a nation’ must choose ‘how to shape history.’” Though this is an insightful observation that is connected to the thesis and the message of the text, once stated, the response moves quickly to discuss how “parallel syntax” helps to develop this comparison, but with little explanation. The result is commentary that describes Albright’s parallel structure within the context of another famous speech: “Albright’s echoing syntax rings out in the manner of King’s ‘I have a dream’ speech, each repetition relating her claims back to her central statement of unity and opportunity, each ring drawing in her listeners.” The response then makes comments on how Albright’s choice to follow a “verse-refrain form” affects her audience, but then lapses into description of that “form” to explain how it causes her audience “to chant in their heads.” Paragraph four examines comparison of Albright’s audience to “women ‘in Burundi’ or ‘in Guatemala’ or ‘in Burma’” and looks at choices in diction for the passage. With so much to examine, there is little room for the response to connect these appropriate pieces of the text to its message. The result is limited commentary that does little to explain how the choices being examined contribute to the message, stating only that they do: “Through this quote and repetition, she has touched the hearts of her listeners and cemented an idea, the idea of perseverance.” The line of reasoning is clearest in the concluding paragraph: “Even at this point they don’t believe her, through her repetition they have classically conditioned much like Pavlov’s dog, to instantly think ‘preserve’ whenever a hardship arises. And thus Albright has used rhetoric to inspire and protect a graduating class of women.”

**Row C: 0/1**

The response did not earn a point for Row C because, though it attempts to provide some larger context, it does not present a complex understanding of the possible contexts of the speech or of the rhetorical situation. In paragraph four, the response attempts to contextualize

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Albright herself as “an authority on the subject” to elevate her as a speaker “so when she tells her audience to ‘persevere,’ they act without questioning.” However, it is neither explained how these choices create that authority, nor is that idea of authority carried throughout the response to contextualize the message or Albright herself. Also, while the response does focus on examination of specific rhetorical choices, it does not approach the relationships among different choices throughout the speech.