ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
SECTION II
Total time — 2 hours

Question 1
(Suggested time — 40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

For as long as there have been organized human civilizations, those civilizations have routinely sought to exterminate one another, often on the basis of nothing more than minute ethnic differences, incompatible religious practices, national origin, or competition for resources. The word for this practice is genocide. Some notable genocides include the Jewish Holocaust during World War II, the Armenian Genocide during World War I, the Cambodian Genocide of the late 1970s, and the Rwandan Genocide of 1994. These events range from organized, bureaucratic events in which a government systematically exterminates a people, to ethnic conflicts that boil into wholesale slaughter of one group by another.

Read the following five sources carefully, including the introductory information for each source. Then, in a well-organized essay that synthesizes at least three of the sources for support, respond to the following questions: should we discuss genocide in high school? If so, what is the best approach for discussing genocide in schools?

Make sure your argument is central; use the sources to illustrate and support your reasoning. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

Source A ("What is Genocide")
Source B (Wiesel)
Source C (Kimmelman)
Source D (Simon)
Source E (Rusesabagina)

Source A

Flintoff, Corey. "Q and A: But Was It Genocide?" *NPR*. NPR, 11 Oct. 2007. Web. 20 Apr. 2015. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=15264313>.

The following is a sidebar to a National Public Radio article on the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

What Is Genocide?

The term — from Greek and Latin roots meaning "the massacre of a family, tribe or race" —was coined in 1943 by Raphael Lemkin, a Jewish legal scholar from Poland. In the 1930s, Lemkin sought unsuccessfully to get the League of Nations to recognize such killings as an international crime. As examples, he cited the massacre of Armenians during World War I and the slaughter of Assyrians in Iraq in 1933.

After World War II, Lemkin's idea of genocide as an international crime became one of the legal bases for the Nuremberg trials of Nazi war criminals.

In 1948, the United Nations adopted the modern definition of genocide, listing "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group." Those acts included:

• killing or causing serious physical or mental harm to members of the group,

• forcing the group to live in conditions calculated to bring about its physical destruction

• Forcibly preventing births among the group, or forcibly sending its children to be reared by members of another group.

The U.N. convention on genocide didn't become law until 1951, after 20 U.N. members had signed it. The United States was the last of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to sign it – in 1988 – and it didn't begin to be enforced until the 1990s, with prosecutions for genocide in Kosovo and Rwanda.

Source B

Wiesel, Elie, and Marion Wiesel. *Night*. New York: Hill and Wang, a Division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006. Print.

The following is an excerpt from a memoir written by a survivor of the Jewish Holocaust.

Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky.

Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever.

Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.

Source C

Kimmelman, Michael. "Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 18 Feb. 2011. Web. 21 Apr. 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/19/arts/19auschwitz.html?_r=0>.

The following is an excerpt from a 2011 New York Times article by Michael Kimmelman

For nearly 60 years, Auschwitz has told its own story, shaped in the aftermath of the Second World War. It now unfolds, unadorned and mostly unexplained, in displays of hair, shoes and other remains of the dead. Past the notorious, mocking gateway, into the brick ranks of the former barracks of the Polish army camp that the Nazis seized and converted into prisons and death chambers, visitors bear witness via this exhibition.

Now those in charge of passing along the legacy of this camp insist that Auschwitz needs an update. Its story needs to be retold, in a different way for a different age.

…A proposed new exhibition at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum here, occupying some of the same barracks or blocks, will retain the piled hair and other remains, which by now have become icons, as inextricable from Auschwitz as the crematoria and railway tracks. But the display will start with an explanatory section on how the camp worked, as a German Nazi bureaucratic institution, a topic now largely absent from the present exhibition, which was devised by survivors during the 1950s.

Back then they wished to erase the memory of their tormentors, as the Nazis had tried to erase them, so they said as little as possible in their exhibition about the Germans who had conceived and run the camp. They focused on mass victimhood but didn't highlight individual stories or testimonials of the sort that have become commonplace at memorial museums as devices to translate incomprehensible numbers of dead into real people, giving visitors personal stories and characters they can relate to. Those piles, including prostheses and suitcases, also stressed the sheer scale of killing at a time when the world still didn't comprehend, and much of it refused to admit to, what really happened here.

…The new exhibition would go on to describe the process of extermination, leading visitors step by step through what victims experienced, and end with a section on camp life, meaning the "daily dehumanization and attempts to keep one's humanity," said Piotr Cywinski, the bearish, red-bearded 39-year-old Polish director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

"If we succeed we will show for the first time the whole array of human choices that people faced at Auschwitz," he explained. "Our role is to show the human acts and decisions that took place in extreme situations here — the diversity of thinking and reasoning behind those decisions and their consequences. So,

we may pose the question, should a mother give a child to the grandmother and go to selection alone, or take the child with her? This was a real choice, without a good solution, but at Auschwitz you had to make the choice."

…The gradual passing of survivors has also meant that Auschwitz faces a historical turning point. "Teenagers now have grandparents born after the war," Mr. Cywinski noted. "This is a very big deal. Your grandparents are your era but your great-grandparents are history.

"The exhibition at Auschwitz no longer fulfills its role, as it used to," he continued. "More or less eight to 10 million people go to such exhibitions around the world today, they cry, they ask why people didn't react more at the time, why there were so few righteous, then they go home, see genocide on television and don't move a finger. They don't ask why they are not righteous themselves.

"To me the whole educational system regarding the Holocaust, which really got under way during the 1990s, served its purpose in terms of supplying facts and information. But there is another level of education, a level of awareness about the meaning of those facts. It's not enough to cry. Empathy is noble, but it's not enough."

This is the theme to which officials here return often. Auschwitz, they say, must find ways to engage young people (some 850,000 students came last year), so they leave feeling what the director called "responsibility to the present."

Source D

Simon, Scott. "'Genocide' Is A Matter Of Opinion." *NPR*. NPR, 11 Apr. 2009. Web. 21 Apr. 2015. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=102997017>.

The following is an opinion piece/radio essay by NPR's Scott Simon on Weekend Edition.

APRIL 11, 2009 8:00 AM ET

When President Obama was beginning his run for office, he said he believed the 1915 slaughter of 1.5 million Armenians by Turkey was not war but genocide and that the American people deserved "a leader who speaks truthfully about the Armenian genocide and responds forcefully to all genocides."

But when Obama addressed the Turkish parliament this week, he referred only to "the terrible events of 1915."

I was part of a PBS program called *The Armenian Genocide*. There was no question mark in the title. I think there are times when you have to say "genocide" to be accurate about mass murder that tries to extinguish a whole group. That's why slaughter of a million Tutsis in Rwanda is not called merely mass murder. An American politician who got to Germany, for example, and called the Holocaust of European Jews merely "killings" would be mocked.

I don't doubt that Obama is still outraged by the Armenian genocide. But when he ran in the presidential primaries, it was important to win support from people concerned about human rights and, perhaps, Armenian-Americans in California.

Now, Obama may feel that it is more important for the United States to win Turkey's cooperation on a range of issues than it is for him to be consistent on a controversy that may seem like old history. But it's not. Almost every year, the Turkish government has charged reporters and writers, including the Nobel laureate, Orhan Pamuk, for "insulting national identity" by referring to the massacres of 1.5 million Armenians as genocide.

Peter Balakian, the pre-eminent scholar of the genocide and co-translator of a new, widely lauded family memoir called *Armenian Golgotha: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide,* told us this week that he admires President Obama for telling Turkish leaders that confronting the past and restoring good relations with Armenia is important.

But he believes Turkey's campaign against acknowledging its genocide raises questions about reliability.

Balakian told us, "A country that spends millions of dollars a year in an effort stop the facts about the Armenian genocide from being known and that persecutes and prosecutes its own citizens for speaking truthfully about the extermination of the Armenians is hardly a government to trust to broker honest and just foreign policy."

In a way, the president's choice to say "killings" in front of his hosts may remind us that it might be wise to regard what any politician says as the words of a suitor who coos "I love you" during courtship. They mean it in the moment. But any adult should know that they may not mean it in just a few weeks.

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Source E

Rusesabagina, Paul, and Tom Zoellner. *An Ordinary Man: An Autobiography*. New York: Viking, 2006. Print.

The following is an excerpt from a memoir about the Rwandan Genocide of 1994.

I will never forget walking out of my house the first day of the killings. There were people in the streets who I had known for seven years, neighbors of mine who had come over to our place for our regular Sunday cookouts. These people were wearing military uniforms that had been handed out by the militia. They were holding machetes and were trying to get inside the houses of those they knew to be Tutsi, those who had Tutsi relatives, or those who refused to go along with the murders.

There was one man in particular whom I will call Peter, though that is not his real name. He was a truck driver, about thirty years old, with a young wife. The best word I can use to describe him is an American word: cool. Peter was just a cool guy; so nice to children, very gentle, kind of a kidder, but never mean with his humor. I saw him that morning wearing a military uniform and holding a machete dripping in blood. Watching this happen in my own neighborhood was like looking up at a blue summer sky and seeing it suddenly turning to purple. The entire world had gone mad around me.

What had caused this to happen? Very simple: words.

The parents of these people had been told over and over again that they were uglier and stupider than the Tutsis. They were told they would never be as physically attractive or as capable of running the affairs of the country. It was a poisonous stream of rhetoric designed to reinforce the power of the elite. When the Hutus came to power they spoke evil words of their own, fanning the old resentments, exciting the hysterical dark places in the heart.

The words put out by radio station announcers were a major cause of the violence. There were explicit exhortations for ordinary citizens to break into the homes of their neighbors and kill them where they stood. Those commands that weren't direct were phrased in code language that everybody understood: "Cut the tall trees. Clean your neighborhood. Do your duty." The names and addresses of targets were read over the air. If a person was able to run away his position and direction of travel were broadcast and the crowd followed the

chase over the radio like a sports event.

The avalanche of words celebrating racial supremacy and encouraging people to do their duty created an alternate reality in Rwanda for those three months. It was an atmosphere where the insane was made to seem normal and disagreement with the mob was fatal.

Rwanda was a failure on so many levels. It started as a failure of the European colonists who exploited trivial differences for the sake of a divide-and-rule strategy. It was the failure of Africa to get beyond its ethnic divisions and form true coalition governments. It was a failure of Western democracies to step in and avert the catastrophe when abundant evidence was available. It was a failure of the United States for not calling a genocide by its right name. It was the failure of the United Nations to live up to its commitments as a peacemaking body All of these come down to a failure of words. And this is what I want to tell you: Words are the most effective weapons of death in man's arsenal. But they can also be powerful tools of life. They may be the only ones.