Did You Know? An Introduction to the GED® Test for New Teachers

COABE 2018

Session Objectives
In this session, we will:
❖ Explore key components and structure of the GED® test
❖ Review student outcomes and research data
❖ Explore tools for the classroom
❖ Provide an overview of content and key strategies
❖ Share resources from the GED® Website

Exploring the Changes
Moving to the Future

A New Paradigm

Critical Thinking Skills: All content areas
Problem-solving Skills: All content areas
Close Reading Skills: All content areas
Evidence-based Writing Skills: Reasoning Through Language Arts
Scoring of the GED® Test

GED College Ready Scores Improve the Chances for College Success

- 176: GED College Ready + Credit
  - Qualify for up to ten college credit hours

- 165: GED College Ready
  - Ready to take college-level courses

- 145: GED College Ready
  - Pass / High School Equivalency
  - Earn a high school equivalency diploma

National Test-taker Data: 2014-present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>RLA</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
<th>Battery - First Attempt</th>
<th>Battery - Multiple Attempts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passed (145 or higher)</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Ready (150 or higher)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Ready + Credit (175 or higher)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</table>

GED® College Ready & College Ready + Credit Update

Momentum and PSE Outcomes

American Council on Education (ACE) Recommendations for the GED® Test

GED® College Ready
- Score of 165 - 174 on any content test
- Waived from developmental education in that content requirements/courses
- Waived from placement testing, and
- Placed directly in credit-bearing courses

GED® College Ready + Credit
- Score of 175 – 200 on any content test
- Same as CR recommendations, plus
- Up to 10 semester hours of college credit
Did You Know? An Introduction to the GED®

Research Results Highlights
Data matches in 2015 and 2016 with National Student Clearinghouse indicate:

- Over 35% enroll in college within a year of earning their GED® credential
- Over 41% enroll in college within 2 years of earning their GED® credential

* Results based on random samples of 10,000 graduates in 2015 and 27,000 graduates in 2016

Research Results Highlights
Data matches in 2015 and 2016 with National Student Clearinghouse indicate:

- **GED® Graduates Follow Through in College**
  - Persistence is at an all-time high
  - Over 90% continue to be enrolled at the 2-year mark!
  - Of the 7% not enrolled: 8 in 10 left PSE with a certificate/credential
  - Higher education leaders are becoming keenly interested in the persistence numbers

Important Tools for the Classroom

RLA, Social Studies, Science, and Math

From Targets to Indicators to Application

**Assessment Targets** describe the general concepts that are assessed on the GED® test

**Indicators** are fine-grained descriptions of individual skills contained within an assessment target

**Application** describes what to look for in student work
Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)

- Most under-used and undervalued resources
- Helpful tool for the classroom
- Details the skills students need to pass the test
- Two formats
  - Official Version
  - Test-taker Version

How to Use PLDs in the Classroom

Tip 1: Assess student’s current skill level
Tip 2: Determine when students are ready to test
Tip 3: Shape learning activities
Tip 4: Add perspective to lesson plans

Check out the PLDs
What Makes Indicators High Impact?

- Important skills that are used across content areas
- May currently receive light coverage in classroom
- Lend themselves to straightforward instruction

Look a Little Closer

RLA
Order sequences of events in texts

Social Studies
Identify the chronological structure of a historical narrative and sequence steps in a process

Science
Reason from data or evidence to a conclusion

Mathematics
Search for and recognize entry point for solving a problem and plan a solution pathway

An Overview of the GED® Test

Getting Started

Purposes of the GED® test

- To provide results leading to the award of a high school equivalency credential
- To provide evidence of readiness to enter workforce training programs or postsecondary education
- To provide actionable information about a candidate’s academic strengths and weaknesses
### GED® Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning through Language Arts</td>
<td>150 minutes</td>
<td>Includes 45 minutes for extended response (timed separately) and a 10 minute break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical Reasoning</td>
<td>115 minutes</td>
<td>Part 1 – calculator not allowed; Part 2 – calculator allowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>70 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
<td></td>
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### Overview of RLA Test

- Content - Integrated reading and writing
  - Close reading
  - Clear writing
  - Editing and understanding the use of standard written English in context
- Source texts – 75% nonfiction; 25% fiction
- Passage length – 400-900 words
- Range of text complexity, including texts at the college- and career-ready level
- Technology-enhanced items and extended response

### Overview of Mathematical Reasoning Test

- Content
  - 45% - Quantitative Problem Solving
    - Number operations
    - Geometric thinking
  - 55% - Algebraic Problem Solving
- Texas Instruments - TI 30XS Multiview™ (calculator allowed on most items)
- Integration of mathematical practices
- Formula page, symbols, and calculator page provided

### Overview of Social Studies Test

- Content
  - 50% - Civics and Government
  - 20% - United States History
  - 15% - Economics
  - 15% - Geography and the World
- Themes
  - Development of Modern Liberties and Democracy
  - Dynamic Responses in Societal Systems
- Social Studies Practices – analyzing, thinking, reasoning
- Technology-enhanced question items
Overview of Science Test

- Content
  - Life Science – 40%
  - Physical Science – 40%
  - Earth and Space Science – 20%
- Themes
  - Human Health and Living Systems
  - Energy and Related Systems
- Science Practices – reasoning and thinking scientifically
- Question types - Technology-enhanced items

Writing and the GED® Test

New Skills for the Test and Beyond

Purpose of Extended Response

To provide test-takers with an opportunity to demonstrate

- Knowledge of writing conventions in English
- Understanding of what they’ve read
- How well they use evidence to build arguments
- Their ability to clearly communicate their thinking in their own words

Constructed Response on RLA

A constructed response item includes:

- One or more source texts
- Texts offer two positions on a given topic
- A prompt that provides instruction on what the students is expected to do
Know What is Expected

When you write . . .

- determine which position presented in the passage(s) is better supported by evidence from the passage(s)
- explain why the position you chose is the better-supported one
- remember, the better-supported position is not necessarily the position you agree with
- defend your assertions with multiple pieces of evidence from the passage(s)
- build your main points thoroughly

Don’t Forget the Little Stuff

Expose students to a structured approach to the writing task and help them understand that they need to:

- Write a complete response, not just a short paragraph (300-500 words)
- Provide commentary on the evidence cited (explain the “why”)
- Fully develop two or three ideas, rather than mention a lot of things without detail
- Leave five minutes at the end for proofreading—that is one of the things evaluated

Inquiring Minds Want to Know: Reasoning through Language Arts

- Can you pass the RLA test and score 0 on the ER item?
- Why should I spend time on teaching writing skills if students don’t need many points on writing to pass the test?
- Now that the Social Studies ER item has been eliminated, do I still need to teach “enduring issues?”
- How does the computer score the ER item? What is it looking for?
Did You Know? An Introduction to the GED® Test

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**Constructed Response Items and Scoring**

- Can you pass the RLA test and score 0 on the ER item?
  - Yes, but most test-takers who pass at HSE do get some score points
  - The ER is designed to measure skills at the higher HSE levels and CCR levels
  - Many test-takers still do not understand the ER task
    - GEDTS conducting research into how to best explain the task and what is required

- Why should I spend time on teaching writing skills if students don't need many points on writing to pass the test?
  - Writing skills are one of the critical differentiators of long-term success
  - Any score point earned counts towards the overall score
  - Building skills in this area helps develop thinking skills that impact performance on the entire test

- How does the computer score the ER item? What is it looking for?
  - The automated scoring engine catalogs the characteristics of a writing sample
  - Compares those characteristics to real exemplar responses with known scores
  - Assigns a score based on similarity to existing exemplars
    - If no similar responses found, ER is human-scored

- Where to Access a Step-by-Step Guide for Argumentative Writing

  **Tuesdays for Teachers**
  - Thinking Strategies for Crafting Constructed Responses (Part 1) (May 24, 2016)
    - [http://www.gedtestingservice.com/educators/thinkingstrategiesforconstructedresponsepart1](http://www.gedtestingservice.com/educators/thinkingstrategiesforconstructedresponsepart1)
  - Thinking Strategies for Crafting Constructed Responses: One Step at a Time - Part 2 (June 2016)
    - [http://www.gedtestingservice.com/educators/thinkingstrategiesconstructedresponsepart2](http://www.gedtestingservice.com/educators/thinkingstrategiesconstructedresponsepart2)
Build Student Knowledge and Critical Reading Skills

Social Studies

What is a Primary Source?

Primary Sources

What Are Enduring Issues?

50% of the questions for the GED® Social Studies Test fall under the category of Civics and Government. Knowing the major themes will provide test-takers with a frame of reference for this content area.

The themes of Civics and Government are:

- An individual's rights versus the good of the community
- Separation of powers
- Checks and Balances
- States' rights versus federal power
**What's My Enduring Issue?**

**Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.**

*First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution*

**What's My Enduring Issue?**

“In order to lay a due foundation for that separate and distinct exercise of the different powers of government, which to a certain extent, is admitted on all hands to be essential to the preservation of liberty, it is evident that each department should have a will of its own…”

*James Madison, Federalist 51, 1789*

**What's My Enduring Issue?**

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*  
*Letter from Birmingham Jail*

**What's My Enduring Issue?**

“...I say, that Power must never be trusted without a check.”

*— John Adams,*  
*Adams-Jefferson Letters*
Build Student Knowledge and Critical Thinking Skills

Science

"If it’s green or wriggles, it’s biology. If it stinks, it’s chemistry. If it doesn’t work, it’s physics..."

Handy Guide to Science

The Scientific Method

Teach experimental design through real-world application and reporting.

We Do It Everyday!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>There is something wrong with the car</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predictions</td>
<td>battery dead, ignition problem, out of gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Predictions</td>
<td>turn on headlights, check spark plug wires, dip stick in gas tank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze Results</td>
<td>headlights work, strong ignition spark, no gas on dip stick-gas gauge reads half full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw Conclusion</td>
<td>gauge inaccurate, out of gas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus on Concepts and Problem Solving
Mathematical Reasoning

Teach the Big Ideas in Algebra
- Variable
- Symbolic Notation
- Equality
- Ratio and Proportion
- Pattern Generalization
- Equations and Inequalities
- Multiple Representations of Functions

Focus on Problem Solving
Polya’s Four Steps to Problem Solving

Understand the problem
Devise a plan
Carry out the plan
Look back (reflect)

Help Students . . .

- Build their reading skills
- Increase their conceptual knowledge in math
- Build math vocabulary
- Depend less on rote memory and more on conceptual knowledge
- Encourage perseverance when solving problems
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Thank you!

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