Inquiring Minds Want to Know: Going Behind the GED® Test

A Workshop by GED Testing Service®
Session Objectives

• Address some of the most frequently asked questions about the GED® test
• Review student performance on the test
• Explore tools for the classroom
• Share resources from the GED.com Website
Content Alignment

How was the test content determined?

• The GED® test was designed to reflect college and career readiness standards
  • Crosswalks show alignment between GED Assessment Targets and most major CCR standards (e.g., State content standards, Adult ED CCR, etc.)
  • External alignment study from WestEd demonstrates alignment between the test and Adult Ed CCR.

Test Structure

How many questions do my students need to answer correctly in order to pass with a score of 145?

We don’t share that information because it can
  • Differ slightly from form to form and
  • Differ slightly by content area

However, the *minimum* HSE requires ~40% of the total score points.
Test Structure

What's the difference between “raw score points” and “scaled score points”?

• Each test form has between about 40 and 65 raw score points, *roughly* corresponding to the number of items
  • Test forms meet detailed blueprints and difficulty specifications
  • Forms are very similar in raw score difficulty but rarely exact
• Transformation to “scaled scores” allows
  • Comparability of test performance — test score represents same level of performance, no matter what form was taken or when it was taken
  • Ease of test score comparison between content areas

Test Structure

How do I know that all test forms are equivalent, especially when a student tells me that one form seems harder/easier than another?

• Test forms all match same blueprint and specifications
• “Test characteristic curves” demonstrate this match across forms
• But content within each reporting category is “sampled”
  • So one form might have a content sample that is more or less familiar to a particular test-taker
  • This may lead to different learner perceptions of the test, even though the test forms are equivalent
Spanish Language Forms

Are the Spanish test forms equivalent to the English forms?

- Yes, the Spanish forms are direct (not “literal”) translations of the sense and meaning of the English forms
  - The RLA editing passages are the only exception to this (RLA Spanish test is 8 raw score points shorter than the English test)
  - The forms are all equated and the scaled scores have the same meaning regardless of language

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Spanish Language Forms

How do candidates who test in Spanish perform vs. those who test in English?

Spanish testers represent only ~5% of total testers

Differences are attributable to
  - Overall less instruction in native language
  - Fewer Spanish instructional materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Spanish Pass Rate</th>
<th>English Pass Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RLA</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battery</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yes, that is possible, 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 is implementing revised ER instructions for students in 2019 – more details will be shared during this conference

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
**Constructed Response Items and Scoring**

How does the computer score the Extended Response item? What is it looking for?

The automated scoring engine catalogs the characteristics of a writing sample; it then

- Compares those characteristics to thousands of real student responses with known scores
- Assigns a score based on similarity to existing exemplars
  - If no similar responses found, ER is human-scored
- About 97% of student responses are scored by the automated engine

**Testing in Science**

Can I drop some of the topics I have been covering now that there are no short answer items on the Science test?

No, The Science test still covers the same content as it has always covered

- The same content is tested today, but knowledge is determined by using the other technology enhanced items
- Understanding scientific investigation/method and experimentation are still evaluated in the test through other methods
Testing in Mathematical Reasoning

Are students allowed to use the calculator on all items on the math test?

No, students are not allowed to use the calculator on the first section of the math test which includes approximately 5 items. The first several questions assess various concepts in number sense and computation, including:

- Ordering fractions/decimals
- Applying number properties involved multiples and factors
- Working with exponents, squares, square roots, cubes, and cube roots
- Identifying absolute value
- Adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing rational numbers
- Determining when a numerical expression is undefined

Exploring the Data

What does the data tell us?
“To build the educated and employed communities of tomorrow….. one student at a time.”

2014 GED® Program Goal

It is more than a test; it is a program!

To ensure that students have the knowledge and skills necessary to earn a high school equivalency credential

To provide instructors and test-takers with information they can use to enhance performance

To enhance instruction so students are ready for postsecondary education and/or workforce training program
Inquiring Minds Want to Know: Go Behind the GED Test

National Pass Rate—a comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Series</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pass Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students are passing the 2014 series test at a higher pass rate than the 2002 series test.

2017 National Data:
What We Know of Student Successes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test-takers</td>
<td>289,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completers</td>
<td>184,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passers</td>
<td>143,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass rates</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Average Passing Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GED® Tests</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>RLA</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Passing Score</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Non-Passing Score</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Scoring of the GED® Test

GED College Ready Scores
Improve the Chances for College Success

- GED® College Ready + Credit
  - Qualify for up to ten college credit hours
  - Ready to take college-level courses

- Pass / High School Equivalency
  - Earn a high school equivalency diploma
National Test-taker Data: 2014-2018

<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>84%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Ready (165 or higher)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></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></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Postsecondary Activity & Outcomes

Based on data matches with National Student Clearinghouse (up to Fall 2017)

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Persistence!

Persistence is at an all-time high

- Congrats, all your hard work is paying off!
- This number currently surpasses overall community college persistence rates

Research Highlights

- Students enrolled in PSE had a mean GED 160 score across content areas
- 3 out of 4 students enroll in 2-year institutions
- 24% enrolled in liberal arts programs
- 4% in technology programs
- 7% enrolled in health-related programs
- 7% in business programs
How do we ensure that more students are “likely to pass” the GED® test?

Tools for the Classroom

GED Ready®

The best predictor of readiness!
Inquiring Minds Want to Know: Go Behind the GED Test

**GED Ready®**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realistic practice opportunity</td>
<td>Computer based and same platform as GED® test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized and normed</td>
<td>Same norming and standardization study as official test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictive</td>
<td>Tells students if they are likely to pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half-length</td>
<td>4.25 hours in length</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GED Ready®**

- Feedback and links to study suggestions (focused study plans)
- Instructional feedback – extended response (RLA) scored by adult educators
- Online scoring tools (provide writing scores, feedback, and suggestions for improvement)
### Three Score Level Indicators on GED Ready®

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Likely to Pass</th>
<th>Too Close to Call</th>
<th>Likely to Pass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-133</td>
<td>134-144</td>
<td>145-200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Dashboard

In the dashboard, you can see the score on GED Ready®: The Official Practice Test. The score is 134-144, which is too close to call. You are only 1 or 2 questions away from passing. You can view the detailed score report by clicking the "See my score report" button or retake the test by clicking the "Take GED Ready® again" button.
My Scores / Scores

My Score Report

(All 3 tabs)

(Step 2 of study plan)
Take Advantage of the Redesigned Website

It’s more than just a place to register for the test!

https://ged.com/

New Home for All Things GED®

Welcome to the home of the official GED® test. Find everything you need to earn your high school equivalency diploma right here.

https://ged.com/
New Website Launched May 2018

• Focus is to improve student experience for:
  - Engagement
  - Persistence
  - Long-term, sustained outcomes

• Because one size doesn’t fit all:
  - we continue to highlight adult education, because we understand that teacher support is invaluable
  - we also have options for the 70% of people (nationally) who want to pursue a GED® on their own

• Findings:
  - Extremely positive response from students

Give Students What They Need…

At the time they need it:

1. **Action (visible) guidance:**
   Instructions and clarity on how they can earn their GED

2. **Behavioral (non-visible) guidance:**
   Help people do what they already want to do
Language Arts Sample Question

Which quotation from the passage supports the idea that the narrator is talking to a friend who is new to the town?

1. "Surprised as I was, I said, 'What in the world is this?'"
2. "I said, 'I'm not sure. I don't think we're going to have rain.'"
3. "I asked her about the weather, and she said it was going to rain later today."
4. "I was arguing with myself about whether we should go outside today or stay inside."
Study Guides
These simple study guides will give you an overview of the topics on each test.

You don’t need to know everything in this guide. If you want to see how close you are to passing, take the GED Ready® practice test.

Get It

Language Arts
- Intro to the Language Arts Test
- Reading for Meaning
  - 6 skills
- Identifying and Creating Arguments
  - 4 skills
- Grammar and Language
  - 4 skills

Social Studies
- Intro to the Social Studies Test
- Reading for Meaning in Social Studies
  - 5 skills
- Analyzing Historical Events and Arguments in Social Studies
  - 4 skills
- Using Numbers and Graphs in Social Studies
  - 4 skills

Take Advantage of the New Content Tools and Resources

- GED Live
- GED Flash
- RLA Videos
GED Live can help extend classroom hours with recorded class sessions

GED® test prep with:

• More than 20 hours of unique GED Class programming
• Provides support for teachers to supplement curriculum
• Engage students who cannot always get to class or require additional independent work
Practice and Feedback!

- 93% of students indicated they are interested in more practice test items and feedback
- #1 on the list of most-wanted resources
- Accessible anywhere from a mobile phone, tablet or computer
- Available for adult education programs – GED Flash for Organizations
- Available to students studying on their own (monthly access fee)
New Readers Press: 8-video series on RLA

Where to find the Extended Response Videos

www.newreaderspress.com/writing-for-the-ged-test

https://GED.com/Study
It’s Your Turn

- Questions?
- Issues?
- Concerns?

Thank you!

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