Moving Up! Building Better Writing Skills

A Workshop by GED Testing Service®
March 26, 2019
WELCOME!

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GED Testing Service

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PD Consultant
Session Objectives

• Discuss challenges that students in writing
• Review strategies and activities to help students improve their basic writing skills
• Provide process for students to learn how to use evidence in writing
• Share resources
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>
Test-taker Scoring Too Close to Call

The Student’s performance

• Is typically based on a test-taker’s consistency in demonstrating skills, or

• May be based on the level of complexity of materials that a test-taker can handle
  • Lower-performing students may be
    • Successful with simpler materials and
    • Less successful with those that are more complex
## Level of Consistency in Demonstrating Skills

<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>Quite Inconsistent</td>
<td></td>
<td>Above 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perform about 50% - 70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Skills Do Students Have and What Do They Need?

GED® Test: Reasoning Through Language Arts
Performance Level Descriptors
What Your Score Means: Level 2 — Pass/High School Equivalency

Test-takers who score at this level are typically able to demonstrate satisfactory proficiency with the skills identified in the Below Passing level as well as to comprehend and analyze challenging passages similar to Sandra Cisneros’ “Eleven,” John Steinbeck’s Travels With Charley: in Search of America, and Donald MacKay’s The Building of Manhattan. Test-takers who score in this performance level are typically able to demonstrate the following skills.

Analyzing and Creating Text Features and Technique
- Order sequences of events in a text at a satisfactory level.
- Make inferences about plot/sequence of events, characters/people, settings, or ideas in a text at a satisfactory level.
- Analyze relationships within texts, including how events are important in relation to plot, conflict, how people, ideas, or events are connected, developed, or distinguished. Identifying elements contribute to theme or relate to key idea; or how a setting or context shapes structure and meaning.
- Analyze the roles that details play in complex literary or informational texts at a satisfactory level.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining connotative and figurative meanings from context.
- Determine meaning, tone, or affected tone if one word is replaced with another, at satisfactory level.
- Analyze the impact of specific words, phrases, or figurative language in text, with a focus on an author’s intent to convey information or construct an argument.
- Analyze a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section with respect to the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of ideas.
- Analyze the structural relationship between adjacent portions of text at a satisfactory level.
- Analyze transitive language or signal words and determine how they refine meaning, emphasize certain ideas, or reinforce an author’s purpose, at a satisfactory level.
- Analyze how a structure of a paragraph, section, or passage shapes meaning, emphasizes key ideas, or supports an author’s purpose at a satisfactory level.

Using Evidence to Understand, Analyze, and Create Arguments
- Comprehend explicit details and main ideas in a text at a satisfactory level.
- Summarize details and ideas in text at a satisfactory level.
- Make sentence-level inferences about details that support main ideas at a satisfactory level.
- Infer implied main ideas in paragraphs and whole texts at a satisfactory level.
- Determine which details support main ideas at a satisfactory level.
- Identify a theme, or identify which elements in a text support a theme at a satisfactory level.
- Make evidence-based generalizations or hypotheses based on, details in text, including clarifications, extensions, or applications of main ideas to new situations at a satisfactory level.
- Draw conclusions or make generalizations that require synthesis of multiple main ideas at a satisfactory level.
- Identify specific pieces of evidence an author uses in support of claims or conclusions to support a main idea at a satisfactory level.

Applying Knowledge of English Language Conventions and Usage
- Edit to correct errors involving frequently confused words at a satisfactory level.
- Edit to correct errors in pronoun usage at a satisfactory level.
- Edit to eliminate dangling or misplaced modifiers or logical word order at a satisfactory level.
- Edit to correct errors in subject-verb or pronoun-antecedent agreement in more complicated situations at a satisfactory level.
- Edit to eliminate wordy or awkward sentence constructions at a satisfactory level.
- Edit to ensure effective use of transitional words, conjunctive adverbs, and other words and phrases that support logic and clarity, at a satisfactory level.
- Edit to correct errors of capitalization at a satisfactory level.
- Edit to eliminate run-on sentences, fused sentences, or sentence fragments at a satisfactory level.
- Edit to ensure correct use of apostrophes with possessive nouns at a satisfactory level.
- Edit to ensure correct use of punctuation at a satisfactory level.

GED® Test: RLA Performance Level Descriptors
What Your Score Means: Level 2 — Pass/High School Equivalency (continued)

1) develop the following additional skills:
- Analyze how an author distinguishes his or her position or responds to conflicting viewpoints.
- Compare two passages that present related ideas or themes in different genres or formats in order to evaluate differences in scope, purpose, emphasis, intended audience, or overall impact.
- Detect the specific steps of an argument the author puts forward, including how the argument claims build on one another.
- Distinguish claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.
- Assess whether the reasoning is valid, identify fallacies in reasoning in an argument and evaluate its impact.
- Identify an underlying premise or assumption in an argument and evaluate the logical support and evidence provided.
- Edit to eliminate non-standard or informal usage.
- Edit to ensure parallelism and proper subordination and coordination.

2) develop the following additional skills:
- Analyze how an author distinguishes his or her position or responds to conflicting viewpoints.
- Compare two passages that present related ideas or themes in different genres or formats in order to evaluate differences in scope, purpose, emphasis, intended audience, or overall impact.
- Detect the specific steps of an argument the author puts forward, including how the argument claims build on one another.
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Building Better Writing Skills

INSTRUCTION

Model + Skills and Strategies + PRACTICE = CONFIDENCE + SKILL
Writing Basics

How about those grammar crimes?
We See It All the Time! It’s a Crime—Grammar Crime That Is!

• Word Choice
• Mechanics – Capitalization, Punctuation, and More!
• Usage – Subject-Verb Agreement, Verb Tense, Pronoun Reference, and More!
• Sentence Structure – Fragments, Run-ons, Comma splices, Dangling modifiers, Parallel structure

Can You Spot the Crime?
On October 10, 2014, the Nobel Peace Prize was given to the famous Pakistani education advocate, Malala Yousafzai.
Grammar Crimes

Spelling
(Homonyms)

My supervisor’s decision effected everyone on the shift.
Mary's sons thought that the resulting assets from the merger of the two companies resources were theirs' to invest.
Grammar Crimes

Spelling
(Contractions)

We have to decide whose going on the expedition based on seniority.
How many punctuation marks are there?
And the answer is...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>full stop/period</td>
<td>I like English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>,</td>
<td>comma</td>
<td>I speak English, French, and Thai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:</td>
<td>semi-colon</td>
<td>I don't often go swimming; I prefer to play tennis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:</td>
<td>colon</td>
<td>You have two choices: finish the work today or lose the contract.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>hyphen</td>
<td>This is a rather out-of-date book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>dash</td>
<td>In each town—London, Paris and Rome—we stayed in youth hostels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>question mark</td>
<td>Where is Shangri-La?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!</td>
<td>exclamation mark</td>
<td>&quot;Help!&quot; she cried. &quot;I'm drowning!&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>oblique/slash</td>
<td>Please press your browser's Refresh/Reload button.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>quotation marks</td>
<td>&quot;I love you,&quot; she said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'</td>
<td>apostrophe</td>
<td>This is John's car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>()</td>
<td>round brackets</td>
<td>I went to Bangkok (my favorite city) and stayed there for two weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[]</td>
<td>square brackets</td>
<td>The newspaper reported that the hostages [most of them French] had been released.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>ellipsis</td>
<td>One happy customer wrote: &quot;This is the best program...that I have ever seen.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grammar Crimes

Punctuation
(Comma Overuse)

Because they want to be correct, sometimes, people put extra commas, in sentences, by mistake.
Nathan went to the local supermarket and he bought soup and crackers for supper.
Check Your Grammar

Punctuation
(Introductory Elements)

Although she was across the room from Timothy Nancy could see his warm smile.

In a memo to her staff Doris informed them of her retirement plans.
Mr. Jackson the president of the local business association went to the meeting.
The climate in both places are mild.

Neither Mary nor her brothers knows what happened.
Grammar Crimes

Interrupting Phrases

The teacher of adult education, alternative education, and ESL are here.
Grammar Crimes

Pronoun Reference
(Pronoun Shift)

If one wants something important out of life, you must get it.
Samantha thanked Jerilyn when she received her degree.
Grammar Crimes

Pronoun Reference
(Agreement with Antecedent)

When writing an essay, everyone performs at the best of their ability.
Grammar Crimes

Sentence Fragment

Because she was new in town and had not met any of her neighbors.
Run-On Sentence

He used to work at Burger Palace now he works at Taco Land.

(Correctly punctuated, but difficult to understand.)
We all watched *Titanic*, it was a great movie!

Sharon was overwhelmed with work, she was able to complete everything before she left the office.
Grammar Crimes

Parallelism

He likes to listen to music, to watch movies and going swimming.
Grammar Crimes

Dangling Modifier

While driving on Greenwood Avenue yesterday afternoon, a tree began to fall toward the gentleman’s car.

Running down the street, the house was on fire.
Write Just for the Fun of It!

Focus on Ideas First!
Nature One Liners
A Sentence Writing Activity

Write a sentence describing one of the following pictures. Make your sentence memorable. Remember, a picture is worth a 1,000 words!
Getting Started with Evidence-Based Writing

Moving students from “I think, I feel, I believe”
Think About It!

If someone asked you why you bought or rented the home in which you live. You might say:

• “It was the perfect location.”
• “It fit my family’s needs.”
• “It had a wonderful kitchen and great room.”
• “It was in the right place at the right price.”

Did You Give Reasons or Evidence?
Start with Real-Life Situations

Which of the following would be more convincing to you?

| People should get together with coworkers and carpool to work and save money. |
|__________________________________________________________________________|

After starting to carpool with some of my friends, I was able to save $35.00 on gas in just the first week. After looking at my credit card statements for the past six months, I found that I spent 35% less on gas than in the previous year. Carpooling is an excellent way to save money.

What made the difference to you?
Wegman’s unseats Trader Joe’s as best grocery store in the U.S.

A large-scale consumer study says there’s a new favorite grocery store in America – and it’s one New Jerseyans know well. Wegman’s the populate supermarket chain that operates seven locations in the state, came out on top of a new study by Market Force that surveyed 10,000 consumers about their experiences at the country’s largest chains.

The Rochester, New York-based chain unseated Trader Joe’s as the reigning leader of the survey this year. Trader Joe’s had topped the list for four years.

Wegman’s didn’t earn enough votes to land on last year’s list drew twice as many when the online survey went out this February. The survey quizzed shoppers in four different U.S. census regions on a range of topics, including checkout speed, friendliness of employees, and the likelihood customers would recommend the store to others, to compile an overall composite loyalty index.

The study said family-owned Wegmans stood out among consumers for its large stores, employee training, fresh produce, reasonable prices, and customer experience that “creates super fans” of the brand.

www.nj.com/news/
What is missing?

Wegman’s is best grocery story in U.S.

Evidence?

Large stores, employee training, fresh produce, reasonable prices, customer experience
“The goal of making an argument is to convince an audience of the rightness of the claims being made, using logical reasoning and relevant evidence...”

Source: National Governor’s Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. College & Career Ready Standards for Reading, Writing and Communication
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Why</th>
<th>How</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the claim?</td>
<td>Why is that claim made?</td>
<td>How do they know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the claim.</td>
<td>These are the reasons for the claim.</td>
<td>This is the evidence that backs up that claim.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steve Peha, Teaching That Makes Sense - [https://www.ttms.org/](https://www.ttms.org/)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What (Question)</th>
<th>Why (Reasons)</th>
<th>How (Evidence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why was Wegman’s selected as the favorite grocery store?</td>
<td>Large stores</td>
<td>Many departments Square footage Spacious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employee training</td>
<td>Initial orientation Ongoing training Consistency of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fresh produce</td>
<td>Local providers Wide variety Excellent condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reasonable prices</td>
<td>Compared to others Sales Price per unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer experience</td>
<td>Courteous staff</td>
<td>Courteous staff Clean, organized Assistance provided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where do you go next?

• Introduce the idea of developing an evidence-based argument
• Use real-life situations
• Start with personal opinion supported by evidence
• Move to more complex situations or real-life articles
But will I ever use this in real life?
Transition to More Real-Life Writing Situations

Use What-Why-How to prepare for job applications, cover letters, and interview responses
Is this what we want from our students?

Attached, please find me resume, as I would LOVE to be a lifestyle/wall street intern as both topics fascinate me and I have great experience in both. The only caveat IS I have to do this during non-working hours...Fear not, as I am willing to work well into the night to get clips and additional experience in writing.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is J. Harden and I am an interested applicant in the position currently available. My skills consist of being great at multi-tasking, great with computers, patient, bilingualism (fluent Spanish), reliable and having very flexible hours. I am 24 years old which is why I think this position is a great fit for me. I have attached my resume in the hopes of being considered for it. I am available weekdays, weekends, and at any time nights.

Thank you in advance for your time reading this email – should you choose to move forward, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail.

Attentively,

JJ
Make it Personal

Have students
• Create a What-Why-How chart that addresses why they would be the “right” candidate for a job
• Have students identify 3-4 reasons
• Have students provide evidence to support their reasons
• Create a cover letter based on chart
Where do you begin?

1. Start with a question
2. Take a position
3. State reasons
4. Provide evidence

Questions

1. Cell phones control our relationships.
2. Computers are changing the way humans think.
3. Texting and cell phones have caused young people to be less able to concentrate and focus (or you can do the reverse—have caused them to be able to handle multi-tasking more effectively and efficiently).
4. Textbooks should be replaced by i-Pads and online resources.
5. Should the minimum wage be raised or lowered?
The Next Move

Writing About What You’ve Read
Money
What's in your wallet? Uh, I mean, what apps are on your smartphone?
By USA Today, adapted by Newsela staff – 3/21/2019

Most people think to grab their keys, smartphone and wallet when they
leave the house. Would it be such a disaster if they left that last one
behind? In the not-too-distant future, it may not be. Physical wallets may
be on the decline.

Think of why people carry an overstuffed billfold in the first place. They
have pictures in it, credit and ATM cards, cash, a driver's license or other
ID, lists and notes, etc. Increasingly, though, most of these are being kept
in digital format on a smartphone instead.

At the airport, you can hand over your iPhone or Android handset instead
of a paper ticket to the TSA agent. Your digital boarding pass gets
inspected and scanned. You can scan your phone entering ballparks,
movie theaters and concert halls, too. Most states will accept an
electronic copy of your automobile's insurance ID card during a traffic
stop.

https://newsela.com/read/ditching-the-wallet/id/50162/
Read and Write

• Assign the appropriate levels of the article to students (based on their ability)
• Have students read the first paragraph and find the claim
• Identify evidence to support the claim
• Write a brief summary indicating how the evidence supported the claim
• Share with class
You don't have to see the whole staircase. Just take the first step.
## From Struggling to Successful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Struggling Writers</th>
<th>Successful Writers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Plan**            | • Are unaware of purpose or process of writing  
• Have little or no knowledge of the text structure of an essay  
• Have difficulty developing plans and staying focused on the topic  
• Experience greater writing anxiety and decreased motivation | • Analyze the task  
• Understand and apply all the elements of an essay  
• Create goals for their writing  
• Develop plans to achieve their goals  
• Discuss how and why a plan will work |
| **Organize**        | • Produce fewer ideas  
• Fail to organize their thoughts | • Develop multiple ideas  
• Organize their ideas |
| **Draft/write**     | • Plan what they are going to say as they write  
• Use imprecise and nonspecific vocabulary  
• Struggle to convey their thoughts, ideas, and opinions  
• Write fewer sentences  
• Focus on mechanics rather than on clarity and organization | • Write using an organized plan, but adjust goals when obstacles arise  
• Use vocabulary accurately  
• Experience fewer difficulties with the elements of an essay  
• Generate sentences that support their ideas |
| **Edit and Revise** | • Experience problems with grammar, punctuation, and spelling  
• Place words and letters too close or too far from each other  
• Do not review and make correction | • Edit spelling, capitalization, and punctuation  
• Make more content revisions  
• Correct overall appearance |
Resources
https://ged.com/

Teaching Resources

Lay the groundwork for effective instruction and guide your students to develop the skills they need to succeed using these resources.

Educator Handbook

Get an overview of GED® test content and recommended teaching strategies.

Skills Students Need to Pass

See exactly what skills students need to demonstrate to pass and to attain each score level.

High Impact Indicators

Skills are not all created equal: Improving certain skills can help students improve in other areas. These resources provide detailed guidance on how you can best help improve student performance.

High Impact Indicators – View in Spanish

HRI Relationships Across Content Areas – View in Spanish

Top Resources

- Professional Development Training
- Resources to Guide Your Instruction
- Free Classroom Materials

Announcements

- Register for the 2018 GED Annual Conference!
Extended Response Videos

- Eight episode series
- Deeper dive into skills and expectations
Need Resources for Source Texts?

• Sample Extended Response Passages and Prompts for Classroom Practice – RLA
• Newsela https://newsela.com/
• Pro/Con http://www.procon.org/
Thank you!

communications@GED.com