

## Educator Scoring Tool for GED Ready™ Reasoning Through Language Arts (RLA) Extended Response

This tool was designed to help teachers better understand how their students' responses to the RLA Extended Response (ER) task might be scored on the 2014 GED® test. The tool breaks down each dimension (or bulleted skill descriptor) in the RLA Multi-Trait Extended Response Scoring Rubric into several sub-dimensions that trained scorers may consider when determining a trait score for a test-taker's response. While the rubric itself was derived directly from career- and college-readiness instructional standards (such as the Common Core State Standards and others), these sub-dimensions have been created and vetted by expert educators to help describe the fine-grained components essential to writing well-constructed text-based arguments.

A couple things to keep in mind when using this tool:

- Each test-taker response will receive three scores—one for each of the three traits in the rubric. Though each trait is broken into multiple dimensions (in this tool we have provided even greater detail in the sub-dimensions), each trait score is determined holistically. That is, dimensions and sub-dimensions can balance each other. In other words, a response can demonstrate such a high level of skill with one dimension that it compensates for a somewhat lower level of skill with another dimension or vice versa. Each trait score is determined by the *quality* of the writing, not merely by the presence or absence of specific elements. For instance, a response that receives a score of 2 on Trait 1 (Creation of Arguments and Use of Evidence) may have a few elements that seem consistent with a 1-level response. However, because the response is so strong in other elements, it can still receive an on-balance score of 2 for Trait 1.
- The Educator Scoring Tool is intended to be an aid, helping you analyze your students' responses to the GED Ready™ - RLA Extended Response prompts in a manner similar to what trained scorers use. You may find that as you become more familiar with the rubric, you can use this tool as a general guide but do not need to fully complete it for every test-taker response you score. With practice, you will most likely discover that you can quickly determine all three trait scores for a specific response by simply reading the response three times (in order to consider each of the traits separately).

## Instructions:

Read each response at least once for each trait.

Then, select the sub-dimension descriptor that most accurately describes the response you are scoring.

Place a mark in the score box next to the appropriate sub-dimension descriptor.

To tabulate each trait score:

- 1) Give 2 points for each sub-dimension on which the response received a score of 2, give 1 point for scores of 1, and give 0 points for scores of 0.
- 2) Tally the total number of points you have awarded.
- 3) Divide the total number of points by the number of sub-dimensions in the trait. **Note:** For the RLA Extended Response, Trait 1 has 12 sub-dimensions, Trait 2 has 15 sub-dimensions and Trait 3 has 14 sub-dimensions.

The number you find through this tabulation is likely to be a good indication of trait score the response should receive. However, you may find it helpful to step back and view the response as a whole one more time. Sometimes, a response is greater (or less than) the sum of its parts! Let your judgment as an experienced educator be your guide.

**Trait 1: Creation of Arguments and Use of Evidence**  
Dimensions and Sub-dimensions

| <b>DIMENSION: Generates text-based argument(s) and establishes a purpose that is connected to the prompt (sub-dimensions below)</b> | Sub-dimensions |  | Score 1  |   | Score 2  |  |  |
|---|----------------|--|--|---|--|--|--|
|   | Score 0        |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|   | <b>1</b>       | Put a mark in this column  | makes no clearly-stated claims                                 | Put a mark in this column   | makes at least one clearly-stated claim or claims are strongly implied   | Put a mark in this column  | claims are explicit and clearly stated. There may be multiple explicit claims made |
|   | <b>2</b>       | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension  | attempted or vague claims are illogical and are not text-based | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension  | at least one claim is logical and text-based, while other claims may be tied to the larger issue rather than to a close reading of the text itself | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension   | claims are logical and based on a close reading of the text                        |
|   | <b>3</b>       |  | attempted or vague claims do not support an overall stance     |   | implied or clearly-stated claims may support an overall stance. Stance may be vague, unclear or inconsistent                                       |  | explicit claims support a clear and consistent stance                              |
| <b>4</b>  |                | attempted or vague claims lack explanation such that the criteria for analyzing the issue or evaluating argumentation is unclear |  | at least one claim is explained such that the criteria for analyzing the issue or evaluating the argumentation is evident |  | claims are explained such that the criteria for analyzing the issue or evaluating the argumentation is evident |  |

|  |   |   |   |  |   |  |  |
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|  | 5 |   | overall stance may lack connection to the prompt or deviate severely  |  | overall stance is connected to the prompt. May wander off purpose occasionally and briefly.                       |  | overall stance is well-connected to the prompt and remains focused throughout the response   |
| <b>DIMENSION: Cites relevant and specific evidence from the source text(s) to support argument (may include few irrelevant piece of evidence or supported claims) (sub-dimensions below)</b> | 6 | Put a mark in this column                             | cites few or no pieces of evidence directly from the source text  | Put a mark in this column                            | cites some evidence from the source text  | Put a mark in this column                            | multiple pieces of specific evidence are cited from the source text  |
|  | 7 | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | may include off-topic or tenuously tied information not drawn from the source text OR                       | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | may include some on-topic information not drawn from the source text  | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension | although some evidence may be drawn from outside knowledge of the topic, the majority of the evidence cited is drawn directly from the source text |
|  | 8 |   | any evidence from the source text that is cited minimally or does not support the claims and overall stance |  | evidence from the source text generally supports the claims and overall stance                                    |  | evidence chosen is largely relevant and is used in service of the argument's overall stance and supports the internal claims                       |
|  | 9 |   | sections of text may be copied from the source text with little or no commentary given                      |  | evidence chosen is commented upon, but commentary may be general, vague or tenuously tied to the overall argument |  | commentary on most pieces of cited evidence is provided, and commentary generally supports the overall stance                                      |

|  |           |   |  |  |  |  |   |
|--|-----------|---|--|--|--|--|---|
| <b>DIMENSION: Analyzes the issue and/or evaluates the validity of the argumentation within the source texts (e.g. distinguishes between supported and unsupported claims, makes reasonable inferences about the underlying premises or assumptions, identifies fallacious reasoning, evaluates the credibility of sources, etc.)* (sub-dimensions below)</b> | <b>10</b> | Put a mark in this column                             | the issue described in the source text is minimally or not analyzed                    | Put a mark in this column                            | the issue in the source texts is partially or simplistically analyzed    | Put a mark in this column                            | the issue in the source texts is analyzed thoroughly and specifically   |
|  | <b>11</b> | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | the argumentation developed in the source texts is minimally or not evaluated          | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | the argumentation in the source texts is partially or minimally analyzed | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension | the validity of the argumentation in the source texts is evaluated thoroughly, citing specific techniques that the author uses to convey his or her message |
|  | <b>12</b> |   | may demonstrate minimal or no understanding of the arguments given in the source texts |  | analysis given may be limited or partially inaccurate                    |  | analysis given is largely accurate and reflects clear understanding of the source texts   |
| <b>TOTALS</b>  |           | <b>0 * x</b><br>number of marks                       |  | <b>1 * x</b><br>number of marks                      |  | <b>2 * x</b><br>number of marks                      | Sum of total points to left   |
| <b>FINAL TRAIT SCORE</b>   |           |   |  |  |  |  | Divide total above by number of sub-dimensions (12)   |

\*Responses need not BOTH analyze the issue AND evaluate the validity of the argumentation. A response can do one OR the other with accuracy and specific reasoning and achieve a high score. High-scoring responses may also attempt to do both.

**Trait 2: Development of Ideas and Organizational Structure**  
Dimensions and Sub-dimensions

| DIMENSION: Contains ideas that are well-developed and generally logical; most ideas are elaborated upon (sub-dimensions below)    | Sub-dimensions  | Score 0   |  | Score 1  |   | Score 2   |   |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|
|   | <b>1</b>  | Put a mark in this column                             | ideas are insufficiently developed                   | Put a mark in this column                              | ideas are inconsistently or simplistically developed  | Put a mark in this column                                       | multiple ideas are well-developed and more than one idea may have multiple extensions |
| <b>2</b>  | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | Ideas may be illogical                                | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | ideas may reflect simplistic or vague reasoning        | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension  | the ideas are generally logical in relation to the source texts |   |
| <b>3</b>  |   | there is minimal or no elaboration on main ideas      |  | some ideas may be elaborated upon (i.e. more than one) |   | most ideas are elaborated upon                                  |   |
| DIMENSION: Contains a sensible progression of ideas with clear connections between details and main points (sub-dimensions below) | <b>4</b>  | Put a mark in this column                             | contains an unclear or no progression of ideas       | Put a mark in this column                              | demonstrates some evidence of a progression of ideas (i.e. some ideas lead logically one to the next) | Put a mark in this column                                       | contains a sensible progression of ideas (i.e. one idea clearly leads into the next)  |
|   | <b>5</b>  | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | details may be irrelevant to the main idea           | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension   | details may be implicitly tied or lack full connection to the main idea                               | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension            | details are clearly connected to main ideas   |
|   | <b>6</b>  |   | details may be absent                                |  | details may be disjointedly connected to each other or inconsistently used in service of the          |   | details are chosen carefully to enhance logic and overall flow                        |

|  |           |   |  |  |   |  |   |
|--|-----------|---|--|--|---|--|---|
|  |           |   |  |  | progression of ideas  |  |   |
| <b>DIMENSION: Establishes an organizational structure that conveys the message and purpose of the response; applies traditional devices appropriately (sub-dimensions below)</b> | <b>7</b>  | Put a mark in this column                             | establishes an ineffective or no discernable organizational structure                        | Put a mark in this column                            | establishes an organization structure   | Put a mark in this column                            | organizational structure is fully established and clearly apparent            |
|  | <b>8</b>  | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | groups ideas ineffectively (e.g. ideas may appear as a list)                                 | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | ideas may be grouped inconsistently or be only partially effective at conveying the message of the response | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension | the organizational structure enhances the message and purpose of the response |
|  | <b>9</b>  |   | does not apply transitional devices or does so inappropriately                               |  | transitional devices are used inconsistently  |  | transitional devices are applied appropriately                                |
| <b>DIMENSION: Establishes and maintains a formal style and appropriate tone that demonstrate awareness of audience and purpose of task (sub-dimensions below)</b>                | <b>10</b> | Put a mark in this column                             | uses an informal style   | Put a mark in this column                            | may inconsistently maintain a formal style  | Put a mark in this column                            | establishes and maintains a formal style throughout the response              |
|  | <b>11</b> | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | uses a tone inappropriate for the task (e.g. overly conversational or list-like in approach) | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | may inconsistently apply an appropriate tone  | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension | establishes and maintains an appropriate tone for on-demand academic writing  |
|  | <b>12</b> |   | demonstrates limited or no awareness of audience and purpose                                 |  | demonstrates a general awareness of audience and purpose  |  | demonstrates and maintains an awareness of audience and purpose of the task   |

|  |           |   |   |  |  |  |   |   |
|--|-----------|---|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| <b>DIMENSION: Chooses specific words to express ideas clearly (sub-dimensions below)</b> | <b>13</b> | Put a mark in this column                             | may frequently misuse words                     | Put a mark in this column                            | may occasionally misuse words  | Put a mark in this column                            | chooses specific words to convey meaning  |   |
|  | <b>14</b> | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | may overuse slang                               | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | may occasionally use slang but it does not overly detract from the overall message | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension | words are chosen purposefully and even the occasional slang term contributes to the overall message |   |
|  | <b>15</b> |   | ideas may be expressed vaguely or repetitiously |  | some idea may be expressed vaguely   |  | ideas are expressed clearly and specifically  |   |
| <b>TOTALS</b>  |           | <b>0 * x</b><br>number of marks                       |   | <b>1 * x</b><br>number of marks                      |  | <b>2 * x</b><br>number of marks                      |   | Sum of total points to left                         |
|  |           |   |   |  |  |  | <b>FINAL TRAIT SCORE</b>  | Divide total above by number of sub-dimensions (15) |

**Trait 3: Clarity and Command of Standard English Conventions\***  
Dimensions and Sub-dimensions

|  |                       |                           |  |                           |  |                           |   |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|---|
| <b>DIMENSION: Demonstrates largely correct sentence structure and a general fluency that enhances clarity (sub-dimensions below)</b> | <b>Sub-dimensions</b> | <b>Score 0</b>            |  | <b>Score 1</b>            |  | <b>Score 2</b>            |   |
|  | <b>1</b>              | Put a mark in this column | sentence structures are largely repetitive and/or simplistic | Put a mark in this column | some sentence structure may be frequently repeated, but the response still demonstrates some variety | Put a mark in this column | demonstrates varied sentence structure within a paragraph or paragraphs |



|  |          |   |  |  |  |  |   |
|--|----------|---|--|--|--|--|---|
|  | <b>2</b> | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | may contain multiple significant errors in subordination, coordination and parallelism                                     | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | subordination, coordination and parallelism are largely correct with a few significant errors                    | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension | demonstrates correct subordination, coordination and parallelism                            |
|  | <b>3</b> |   | may contain frequent wordy and/or awkward constructions  |  | may demonstrate occasional wordiness and/or awkwardness  |  | avoids wordiness and awkward sentence structure   |
|  | <b>4</b> |   | transitional words and conjunctive adverbs are either absent, used inappropriately or do not contribute to overall clarity |  | transitional words and conjunctive adverbs are used inconsistently and may show occasional problems with clarity |  | uses transitional words, conjunctive adverbs and other words that support logic and clarity |
|  | <b>5</b> |   | may contain multiple significant errors with run-on sentences, fused sentences and/or sentence fragments                   |  | may contain a few run-on sentences, fused sentences and/or sentence fragments                                    |  | avoids run-on sentences, fused sentences and sentence fragments                             |

|  |          |   |   |  |  |  |   |
|--|----------|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| <b>DIMENSION: Demonstrates competent application of conventions (sub-dimensions below)</b> | <b>6</b> | Put a mark in this column                             | may contain frequent errors with commonly confused words and homonyms, including contractions | Put a mark in this column                            | may contain occasional errors with commonly confused words and homonyms, including contractions            | Put a mark in this column                            | demonstrates understanding of the usages of commonly confused words and homonyms, including contractions  |
|  | <b>7</b> | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | may contain frequent errors with subject-verb agreement                                       | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | may contain occasional errors with subject-verb agreement  | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension | demonstrates appropriate application of subject-verb agreement  |
|  | <b>8</b> |   | may contain frequent errors with pronoun usage  |  | may contain occasional errors with pronoun usage   |  | demonstrates appropriate use of pronoun usage (e.g. pronouns and their antecedents agree, unclear pronoun references are avoided and pronoun cases are used properly) |
|  | <b>9</b> |   | word order may be largely inappropriate or confusing  |  | demonstrates largely correct word order with correctly placed modifiers, but may contain occasional errors |  | demonstrates correct word order and modifiers are placed correctly  |

|  |           |   |   |  |  |  |  |
|--|-----------|---|---|--|--|--|--|
|  | <b>10</b> | Put a mark in this column                             | may contain frequent errors with capitalization | Put a mark in this column                            | may contains occasional errors with capitalization | Put a mark in this column                            | demonstrates proper use of capitalization (e.g. proper nouns, titles and the beginnings of sentences)  |
|  | <b>11</b> | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | may contain frequent errors with apostrophes    | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | may contain occasional errors with apostrophes     | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension | demonstrates appropriate use of apostrophes with possessive nouns  |
|  | <b>12</b> |   | may contain frequent errors with punctuation    |  | may contains occasional errors with punctuation    |  | demonstrates appropriate use of punctuation (e.g. commas in a series or in appositives and other non-essential elements, end marks, and appropriate punctuation for clause separation) |

|  |           |   |  |  |   |  |  |   |
|--|-----------|---|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| <b>DIMENSION: Errors do not interfere with comprehension; overall, standard usage is at a level appropriate for on-demand draft writing (sub-dimensions below)</b> | <b>13</b> | Put a mark in this column                             | contains severe and frequent errors in mechanics and conventions that interfere with comprehension | Put a mark in this column                            | may contain frequent errors in mechanics and conventions that occasionally interfere with comprehension | Put a mark in this column                            | may contain some errors in conventions, but they do not interfere with comprehension |   |
|  | <b>14</b> | if the test-taker earned a zero in this sub-dimension | standard usage is at an unacceptable level for on-demand draft writing OR                          | if the test-taker earned a one in this sub-dimension | standard usage is at a minimally acceptable level of appropriateness for on-demand draft writing        | if the test-taker earned a two in this sub-dimension | standard usage is appropriate for on-demand draft writing                            |   |
|  |           |   | response is insufficient to demonstrate level of mastery over conventions and usage                |  |   |  |  |   |
| <b>TOTALS</b>  |           | 0 * x number of marks                                 |  | 1 * x number of marks                                |   | 2 * x number of marks                                | Sum of total points to left  |   |
|  |           |   |  |  |   |  | <b>FINAL TRAIT SCORE</b>   | Divide total above by number of sub-dimensions (14) |

\* Because test-takers will be given only 45 minutes to complete Extended Response tasks, there is no expectation that a response should be completely free of errors to receive a score of 2.