2014 GED® Program

Educator Handbook

Everything you need to prepare students for the 2014 GED® test

- In-depth look at GED® test content
- Recommended teaching strategies
- How to know if your students are ready

Annette, 1997 graduate
Chapter 1: The 2014 GED® Test – A Closer Look

The 2014 GED® test was built from the ground up to give students a test that measures the skills they need to succeed. The test focuses on the foundational knowledge and skills needed for career- and college-readiness, so colleges and employers know that students who pass the 2014 GED® test have the skills to excel on the job or in the classroom.

Keep reading to learn more about the 2014 GED® test, including:

• 2014 GED® test basics
• 2014 GED® test benefits
• What’s on the Reasoning Through Language Arts test
• What’s on the Mathematical Reasoning test
• What’s on the Science test
• What’s on the Social Studies test

2014 GED® test basics

• 4 test subjects: Reasoning Through Language Arts (RLA), Mathematical Reasoning, Science, and Social Studies
• Students must score 150 in all 4 test subjects to earn their GED® credential
• Students don’t have to take all 4 tests at once
• Delivered on computer
• Available in both English and Spanish
• Approximately 8 hours for all 4 test subjects
• 4 essays (known as “constructed response” items)
• Offers two passing levels:
  o GED® Passing Score (score of 150-169 on each test)
  o GED® Score with Honors (score of 170-200 on each test)
• Passing levels are based on the performance of graduating high school seniors from the class of 2013 who took the test as part of the standardization and norming study
• Scores reported in the Enhanced Score Report, available in student’s MyGED™ account

2014 GED® test benefits

• Pay-as-you-go option lets students pay for the part they want, when they want to take it
• All students get $20 off 2 retakes per subject with the discounted retakes program
• Same-day scoring
• Free accommodations available including extra time and paper
• 100% refund when test canceled or re-scheduled at least 24 hours before appointment
What’s on the Reasoning Through Language Arts (RLA) test

- 150 minutes
- Includes multiple choice, short answer, drop-down, and a variety of technology-enhanced items
- Includes one 45-minute extended response (essay)
- Includes a 10-minute break
- Featured text on test is 75% informational (non-fiction), 25% literature (fiction)
- Text ranges in complexity, including texts at the career- and college-readiness level
- Text ranges from 400 to 900 words long
- Text vocabulary focuses on words that appear frequently in a wide variety of disciplines
- Measures the student’s:
  - Ability to read closely, write clearly, and edit and understand written English
  - Ability to understand, interpret, and answer questions based on text
  - Ability to use evidence to support an argument
  - Understanding of basic English skills at a level needed to succeed in college or a job

What’s on the Mathematical Reasoning test

- 115 minutes
- 2 parts with no break
  - No calculator allowed on the first 5 questions
  - Can use a TI-30XS calculator for the remaining questions
- Includes multiple choice, drop-down, and a variety of technology-enhanced items
- Calculator guide is provided
- Math formulas are provided
- Measures the student’s:
  - Quantitative problem-solving abilities (45%)
  - Algebraic problem-solving abilities (55%)
What’s on the Science test

- 90 minutes
- Includes multiple choice, drop down, and a variety of technology-enhanced items
- Includes 2 short answer questions that should take about 10 minutes each to write
- No break
- Can use a TI-30XS calculator
- Measures the student’s:
  - Ability to read, understand, and interpret science-related texts
  - Problem-solving abilities in science-related situations
  - Knowledge of:

What’s on the Social Studies test

- 90 minutes
- Includes multiple choice, drop-down, and a variety of technology-enhanced items
- Includes one 25-minute extended response (essay)
- No break
- Can use a TI-30XS calculator
- Measures the student’s:
  - Ability to read, understand, and interpret social studies-related texts and data
  - Problem-solving abilities in social studies-related situations
  - Knowledge of:
Chapter 2: What Scores Look Like

Students who take the GED® test or GED Ready™: The Official Practice Test will get their test scores in their MyGED™ account at GED.com. All students receive an Enhanced Score Report under the “My Scores” section that includes 4 parts:

- My Scores
- How I Can Score Higher (Personal Study Plan)
- What My Score Means
- Review My Written Answers (for GED Ready™ only)

Read below for more information on the score scale and personal study plan.

My Scores

My Scores is where students find the score they received on their GED® test or GED Ready™. The My Scores section looks slightly different depending on whether the score is for the GED® test or GED Ready™. That’s because the tests have different score levels.

GED® Test Scores

- **Below Passing** (score of 100 – 149)
  Students who earn a below passing score did not demonstrate the skills graduating high school seniors need to earn their high school diploma.

- **GED® Passing Score** (score of 150-169)
  Students who earned the GED® Passing Score demonstrated the skills that graduating high school seniors need to earn their diploma.

- **GED® Score with Honors** (scores of 170-200)
  Students who earned the GED® Score with Honors demonstrated the skills that graduating high school seniors need to earn their diploma at a level indicating career- and college-readiness.
GED Ready™ Scores

- **Not Likely to Pass** (score of 100-142)
  Students who score Not Likely to Pass need to study more.

- **Too Close to Call** (score of 143-157)
  Students who score Too Close to Call may be able to pass the GED® test, but should study more before testing to be sure.

- **Likely to Pass** (score of 158-200)
  Students who score Likely to Pass are ready to take the GED® test. In fact, 95% of these students go on to pass the real test.

How I Can Score Higher (Personal Study Plan)

Students who didn’t pass or who want to try for a higher score should use the personal study plan in the score report. The recommendations are based on their unique performance on each GED® test or GED Ready™.

- See what skills they need to work on to score higher
- Select their favorite study materials to get a personal study plan with pages and chapters to review
Chapter 3: Strategies for Teaching the Test

Your students rely on you to teach them the skills and knowledge they need to pass the GED® test. Here are some teaching strategies to help your students develop those skills as they prepare for the GED® test:

- Use Performance Level Descriptors
- Prepare your students with test-day tools
- Help students write high-scoring constructed responses
- Give students feedback on their GED Ready™ constructed responses
- Help organize math problems

Use Performance Level Descriptors

The Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) explain the skills students must demonstrate to score in each of the 3 possible performance levels on the GED® test and GED Ready™. Here are helpful tips for using the PLDs in your classroom to prepare your students for the test:

Tip 1: Use PLDs to assess your student’s current skill level
- Identify where to focus in order to develop the skills needed to move to the next performance level

Tip 2: Use PLDs to determine when your students are ready to test
- Determine if a student should take GED Ready™ or the GED® test
- Use with the Enhanced Score Report’s personal study plan to develop student skills

Tip 3: Use PLDs to shape learning activities
- Set learning objectives in your classroom based on the PLDs
- Determine if you need to adjust how you’re approaching the content
- Work one-on-one with students to help develop needed skills

Tip 4: Use PLDs to add perspective to lesson plans
- Determine your students’ levels of preparedness and create lesson plans accordingly
- Identify the gaps in your students’ skills and develop focused lesson plans to address those gaps
Prepare your students with test-day tools

It’s just as important for students to know how to use the tools available to them during the test. Use these tools in your classrooms so they are prepared on test day.

- **Extended Response Answer Guidelines** include recommendations for students when crafting their response. Available for RLA and Social Studies.
- **Calculator Reference Sheet** features instructions for using the on-screen TI-30XS calculator allowed on the Mathematical Reasoning, Social Studies, and Science tests.
- **Math Formula Sheet and Explanations** offers a list of formulas students can reference when taking the test.

Help students write high-scoring constructed responses

During the scoring process, some items are weighted more heavily than others. The constructed response items make up 15-20% of the student’s score. We recommend that all students answer these items. There are no score deductions for incorrect answers. Make sure your students are prepared to craft fully developed responses.

Below is one suggested approach for drafting a fully developed constructed response. Use the **Steps for Drafting a Constructed Response** to guide your students through each stage of this process. See the “Create a Thesis Statement” worksheet on the next page and more tools on the CD.

**Steps for Drafting a Constructed Response**

1. Read the passage and question
2. Unpack the prompt (identify key words)
3. Rewrite the question and turn the question into a thesis statement
4. Collect relevant details from passage
5. Organize details into a logical order. Use a graphic organizer if that helps.
6. Draft an answer
7. Re-read and edit/revise the answer making sure all parts of the question are answered
Create a Thesis Statement

A thesis is an answer to a specific question. A thesis statement makes a claim or proposition that reflects a specific point of view. The thesis statement should recognize both sides of a question, yet focus on two to three specific points (discussion points) sometimes called points of analyses. A thesis statement is the roadmap for the written response. The placement of the thesis statement is generally located in the introduction and summarized in the conclusion of a writing sample.

Sample Thesis Frames

The general argument made by ___________ in his/her work ________________ is that ________________.

Although ________________ (believes, demonstrates, argues) that ________________, ________________ supports/provides the clearest evidence ________________.

A key factor in both ________________ can be attributed to ________________.

When comparing the two positions in this article, ________________ provides the clearest evidence that ________________.

Looking at the arguments regarding ________________, it is clear that ________________.

In discussion of ________________, one controversial issue has been ________________. ________________ believes that ________________. On the other hand, ________________ asserts that ________________. ________________ is clearly the best supported argument on the issue of ________________.

Check the CD for more constructed response tools to print and use in your classroom:

- Sample Lesson Plan & Instructional Plan
- Tools for Drafting a Constructed Response
- Websites and Resources
- Extended Response Answer Guidelines
Give students feedback on their GED Ready™ constructed responses

GED Ready™ for RLA, Social Studies, and Science include constructed response items just like the items that are on the GED® test. Since GED Ready™ doesn't score the constructed responses, your students are counting on you for feedback.

To give your students feedback on their constructed responses:
1. Have students take GED Ready™
2. Once they’ve finished, ask them to print out their score report. This will include their written responses.

Use these constructed response tools to help you score students’ responses:

- **Source Text and Prompts** show the question students responded to and the text or data they based their response on.

- **Constructed Response Educator Guides** give sample responses for GED Ready™ questions at each possible score level. They also explain why each response received the score it did, so you can understand what to look for in each response.

- **Constructed Response Scoring Tools** are hands-on tools to use when scoring constructed responses. They break down the constructed response into the dimensions and subdimensions that are being evaluated and explain how to award points.
Help organize math problems

Help students translate mathematical questions into steps that help them solve the problem using the **Math Graphic Organizer**. Use this organizer in the classroom to show students how to break down the problem and organize available information.

![Math Graphic Organizer Diagram]

**Problem:**

**Connect**
What do I know?
What additional information is needed?
What formulas are needed?

**Brainstorm**
Brainstorm ways to solve this problem.
What possible strategies could be used?

**Main Idea**
What do you need to find?
What do you need to know to answer the question?

**Solve**
Try it here.
Underline key words/phrases in the problem and say what they mean. Is the answer reasonable?

**Write**
What steps do I need to follow to solve the problem?
How is the problem relevant to me?
How could the problem be extended?

Adapted from Zollman (2009)

Check the CD for more math tools to print and use in your classroom:

- Math Graphic Organizer
- Math Formula Sheet & Explanation
- Calculator Reference Sheet
- More Math Tools: Websites and Resources
- Math Word Problem Translation Guide
Chapter 4: See if your students are ready

The best way to find out if your students are ready for the real test is to give them GED Ready™: The Official Practice Test. GED Ready™ is the only practice test that tells if a student is likely to pass the GED® test. In fact, 95% of students who score “ Likely to Pass” on GED Ready™ go on to pass that test subject of the real test.

Keep reading to learn more about:

- How GED Ready™ predicts test performance
- What GED Ready™ scores mean
- How to use the personal study plan

How GED Ready™ predicts test performance

Unlike practice tests in the past, GED Ready™ was designed to predict whether a student will pass the operational GED® test. It went through the same standardization and norming process as the operational test, so students who receive a “Likely to Pass” score should be considered prepared and encouraged to take the operational test.

GED Ready™ questions are at the same level of difficulty as questions on the operational test, so it really does predict success on the operational GED® test!

"We’ve found that our students’ GED Ready™ results are within a point or two of the score they receive on the actual test. It’s a really good predictability tool and we’re confident that when a student takes GED Ready™, they’ll earn a similar score on the real GED® test."

- Raymond Haddix, Simpson County Adult Education, Franklin, KY
What GED Ready™ scores mean

Once students take GED Ready™, they’ll receive their Enhanced Score Reports on MyGED™ at GED.com. Score reports show their test score, the skills they need to work on, what they did well on, and their constructed response, if applicable.

Scores fall into one of three categories: Likely to Pass, Too Close to Call, and Not Likely to Pass.

- **Likely to Pass (158-200)** If your students score Likely to Pass, they should take that GED® subject test as soon as possible. Score predictions are valid for 60 days; make sure they test while the prediction is still valid.

- **Too Close to Call (143-157)** If your students score Too Close to Call, use the Enhanced Score Report to see what skills they need to work on before they take the operational test. Depending on their score, they may want to take GED Ready™ again before taking the GED® test.

- **Not Likely to Pass (100-142)** If your students score Not Likely to Pass, use the Enhanced Score Report to see what skills they need to work on before they take the operational test. Have students take GED Ready™ again to make sure they’re ready.

How to use the personal study plan

Students also get a personal study plan in their Enhanced Score Reports after they take GED Ready™. As an educator, you can use this plan to identify the skills and pages to work on in class.

To make the most of the Enhanced Score Report’s study plan in your classroom:

1. Have students log into their MyGED™ account and view their score report
2. Ask students to select the study materials used in class from the drop-down menu to get the recommendations specific to your classroom materials
3. Ask students to print their report with the recommendations and personal study plan

Start reviewing the recommended materials in your class. It’s that simple!
Chapter 5: Additional Resources

The enclosed CD has dozens of tools and resources to help you prepare your students for the 2014 GED® test. This list is an inventory of the tools available on the CD and suggestions for using them.

Teaching Constructed Response Tools

**Sample Lesson Plan & Instructional Plan** - Use this sample constructed response item in your classroom to give students extra practice.

**Tools for Drafting a Constructed Response** – Helpful step-by-step process to guide your students through the constructed response writing process. Use this tool in your classroom to help them understand what goes into a high-scoring constructed response.

**More Constructed Response Tools: Websites and Resources** - Visit these websites for additional tools and resources to help you teach your students about writing constructed responses.

**Constructed Response Educator Guides** – These helpful guides include sample constructed response items at each possible score level and explanations of why each response received the score it did.

**Constructed Response Scoring Tools** – Hands-on tools to use when scoring constructed response items. Shows you what to look for in each answer and how to score them.

**GED Ready™ Prompts & Source Texts** – Shows the questions students responded to and the text or data they based their GED Ready™ constructed responses on.

**Extended Response Answer Guidelines** – Students receive these recommendations on test day to help them write their constructed responses. Useful guidelines to use in class, too.

**Skills Students Need to Pass (Performance Level Descriptors - PLDs)**

**Skills Students Need to Pass (Performance Level Descriptors) – 2014 GED® test** – See the exact skills students need to pass the GED® test. Perfect tool to guide your lesson plans!

**Skills Students Need to Pass (Performance Level Descriptors) – GED Ready™** - Similar to the GED® test descriptors, the GED Ready™ descriptors break the skills down by GED Ready™ score levels.

**Assessment Target Comparison Table** – Compares the official descriptor language with the student friendly language in the Enhanced Score Report. Use this table to get a more detailed look at the skills students need to develop.
Teaching Math Tools

Math Graphic Organizer – This in-class tool will help your students organize the information in math problems and identify their next steps for solving the problem.

More Math Tools: Websites and Resources – Visit these websites for additional tools and resources to help you teach the content on the 2014 GED® test - Mathematical Reasoning.

Math Word Problem Translation Guide – Use this guide in your classroom to help students understand and solve word problems. Includes sample word problems.

Math Formula Sheet Explanation – Teach students how to use the basic math formulas included on this sheet, which is provided to students on test day.

Calculator Reference Sheet – Teach students how to perform basic functions using the on-screen TI-30XS calculator with this sheet, which is provided to students on test day.

2014 GED® Program Resources

GED Ready™ & Publisher Partner Flyer – Follow the easy-to-follow steps to host a GED Ready™ testing session in your classroom. Includes publishers who sell GED Ready™.

2014 Professional Development Flyer for Educators – If you see any resources that are on the list but not included on the CD, visit GEDtestingservice.com to access them.

Assessment Guide for Educators – Learn more about the GED® test, including types of questions on the test and how the questions align to career- and college-readiness standards.

MyGED™ Student Guide – Share this guide with students to explain how to sign up, clear alerts, schedule, and check scores in MyGED™ at GED.com. Also covers the basics of the GED® program.

Calculator Tutorial – Use this interactive tutorial to give students practice with the TI-30XS calculator used on parts of the Science, Social Studies, and Mathematical Reasoning test subjects.

Introduction to the TI-30XS On-Screen Calculator Video - Show students how the new on-screen calculator functions with the 2014 GED® test using this demonstration video.

Computer-based Testing Tutorial – Use this interactive tutorial to let students experience answering questions on a computer so they’ll be more comfortable on test day.

Item Samplers – Access the item samplers to see both the types of questions and the type of content that will be on the 2014 GED® test. Available for all 4 test subjects.