GACE® Study Companion
Middle Grades Language Arts Assessment

For the most up-to-date information, visit the ETS GACE website at gace.ets.org.
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**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Welcome to the GACE Study Companion

Get Ready to Show What You Know

You have gained the knowledge and skills you need for your teaching career. Now you are ready to demonstrate your abilities by taking the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators® (GACE®).

Using the GACE Study Companion is a smart way to prepare for the test so you can do your best on test day. The Study Companion can help you stay on track and make the most efficient use of your study time.

The Study Companion contains practical information and helpful tools including:

- An overview of the assessments
- Descriptions of different types of test questions
- Information about scores and how to understand them
- Test-taking tips and strategies
- Frequently asked questions
- Specific information about the assessment you are taking
- Practice questions and explanations of correct answers
- A study plan template
- Additional resources to help you study

So where should you start?

Begin by reviewing the Study Companion in its entirety, paying particular attention to the content specifications in About the Assessment beginning on page 26. The content specifications detail the knowledge and skills to be measured on the assessment. These specifications are aligned with the:

- Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) — these standards are available on the Georgia Department of Education website at www.doe.k12.ga.us under Curriculum and Instruction
- Content standards for Georgia’s state-approved educator preparation programs — see Educator Preparation Rules in the Rules section on the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) website at www.gapsc.com

To identify the areas you may need to study, go through the standards and note the specific areas that you need to review.
Once you have reviewed the Study Companion and the standards, you can create your own personalized study plan and schedule based on your individual needs and how much time you have before test day. Be sure to also seek other resources to strengthen your content knowledge. See the Preparation Resources section of this Study Companion.

Keep in mind that study habits are individual. There are many different ways to successfully prepare for your test. Some people study better on their own, while others prefer a group setting. You may have more energy early in the day, but another test taker may concentrate better in the evening. Use the Study Companion to develop the approach that works best for you.

Your teaching career begins with preparation. Good luck!
Know What to Expect

These questions and answers will give you an overview of the GACE assessments.

Why do I need to take a GACE assessment?

GACE is the educator certification assessment program for the state of Georgia. The purpose of the GACE assessments is to help the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) ensure that candidates have the knowledge and skills needed to perform the job of an educator in Georgia’s public schools. Professionals serving in most public schools must hold a valid certificate, appropriate to their field of employment.

Which assessments should I take?

Before you register for an assessment, identify which assessment(s) you need to take. Note that some assessments contain more than one test, and that you will be required to pass all of the tests within an assessment to meet the certification requirements. Educator testing requirements for Georgia are available from the GaPSC website at [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com) under Educator Assessment.

How do I find out what is covered on the assessment I need to take?

Each Study Companion contains the content specifications for the assessment that detail the knowledge and skills to be covered. These specifications are aligned with the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards and the content standards for Georgia’s state-approved educator preparation programs.

What are the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS)?

The CCGPS is a set of core standards for kindergarten through high school in English language arts, mathematics, and grades 6-12 literacy in science, history, social studies, and technical subjects that have been formally adopted by Georgia and 44 other states, including the District of Columbia (D.C.), and two territories, along with the Department of Defense Education Activity. The CCGPS provide a consistent framework to prepare students for success in college and the 21st century workplace.

What are the content standards for Georgia’s state-approved educator preparation programs?

A set of content standards has been adopted by the GaPSC on which state-approved educator preparation program providers prepare their candidates. These standards are adapted from national content standards.

How are the GACE assessments administered?

All GACE assessments are administered via computer at specially equipped test centers throughout Georgia, in neighboring states, and internationally.
Where and when are the GACE assessments offered?
Test dates and test center locations are available on the GACE website at **www.gace.ets.org**. When you register for a test, you can select the test center that is most convenient for you.

How do I get my scores?
Your scores are available through your ETS GACE testing account on the GACE website at **www.gace.ets.org** on the score reporting date listed in the Registration Bulletin. Your test results are released to you, the GaPSC, and your program provider, if you have one.

**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Familiarize Yourself with Test Questions

The GACE assessments include several types of test questions, which can be broken into two categories: **objective items** (for which you select or produce an answer that is scored either correct or incorrect) and **constructed response** (for which you write or record a response of your own that is scored by trained raters based on scoring guidelines). You may be familiar with these question formats from taking other standardized tests. If not, familiarize yourself with them so you don’t spend time during the test figuring out how to answer them.

**Understanding Selected-response Questions**

The majority of the questions in the GACE assessments are selected-response questions. The single-question format presents a direct question or an incomplete statement. This type of question may begin with the phrase “Which of the following . . .” Take a look at this example:

Which of the following is a flavor made from beans?

A. Strawberry  
B. Cherry  
C. Vanilla  
D. Mint

How would you answer this question?

All of the answer options are flavors. Your job is to decide which of the flavors is the one made from beans.

Try following these steps to select the correct answer.

1) **Limit your answer to one of the options given.** You may know that chocolate and coffee are also flavors made from beans, but they are not listed. Rather than thinking of other possible answers, focus only on the options given (“Which of the following . . .”).

2) **Eliminate incorrect answers.** You may know that strawberry and cherry flavors are made from fruit and that mint flavor is made from a plant. That leaves vanilla as the only possible answer.

3) **Verify your answer.** You can substitute “vanilla” for the phrase “Which of the following” and turn the question into this statement: “Vanilla is a flavor made from beans.” This will help you be sure that your answer is correct. If you’re still uncertain, try substituting the other options to see if they make sense.

You may want to use this technique as you answer selected-response questions on the practice tests.
Try a more challenging example

The vanilla bean question is pretty straightforward, but you’ll find that more challenging questions have a similar structure. For example:

```
Entries in outlines are generally arranged according to which of the following relationships of ideas?

A. Literal and inferential
B. Concrete and abstract
C. Linear and recursive
D. Main and subordinate
```

You’ll notice that this example also contains the phrase “which of the following.” This phrase helps you determine that your answer will be a “relationship of ideas” from the options provided. You are supposed to find the option that describes how entries, or ideas, in outlines are related.

Sometimes it helps to put the question in your own words. Here, you could paraphrase the question in this way: “How are outlines usually organized?” Since the ideas in outlines usually appear as main ideas and subordinate ideas, the answer is D.

**QUICK TIP ➔** Don’t be intimidated by words you may not understand. It might be easy to be thrown by words like “recursive” or “inferential.” Read carefully to understand the question and look for an answer that fits. An outline is something you are probably familiar with and expect to teach to your students. Remember to slow down, and use what you know.

**Watch out for selected-response questions containing “NOT,” “LEAST,” and “EXCEPT”**

This type of question asks you to select the option that does not fit. You must be very careful because it is easy to forget that you are selecting the negative. This question type is used in situations in which there are several good solutions or ways to approach something, but also a clearly wrong way.

**How to approach questions about graphs, tables, or reading passages**

Some questions include introductory information such as a map, table, graph, or reading passage (often called a stimulus) that provides the information the question asks for. In the case of a map or graph, you might want to read the question first, and then look at the map or graph. In the case of a long reading passage, you might want to read the passage first, make notes about places you think are important, and then review your notes and answer the question.

You may also encounter several questions that relate to a single table, graph, or reading passage. There may also be a group of questions that has an initial stimulus that sets the scene and provides information, with a second stimulus at some later point in the questions that provides more information or a subsequent development.

The important thing is to be sure you answer the questions as they refer to the material presented. Be sure to read each question carefully.
How to approach other objective question formats

New formats for presenting information are developed from time to time. Tests may include audio and video stimulus materials such as a movie clip or some kind of animation, instead of a map or reading passage. Other tests may allow you to zoom in on the details in a graphic or picture. Pay attention to the directions on each screen to be sure you understand how the information is being presented for each question or group of questions.

Tests may also include interactive types of questions. These questions take advantage of technology to assess knowledge and skills that go beyond what can be assessed using standard single-selection selected-response questions. If you see a format you are not familiar with, read the directions carefully. The directions always give clear instructions on how you are expected to respond.

The interactive question types may ask you to respond by:

- **Typing in an entry box.** When the answer is a number, you might be asked to enter a numeric answer or, if the test has an on-screen calculator, you might need to transfer the calculated result from the calculator into the entry box. Some questions may have more than one place to enter a response.

- **Clicking check boxes.** You may be asked to click check boxes instead of an oval when more than one option within a set of answers can be selected.

- **Clicking parts of a graphic.** In some questions, you will choose your answer by clicking on location(s) on a graphic such as a map or chart, as opposed to choosing from a list.

- **Clicking on sentences.** In questions with reading passages, you may be asked to choose your answer by clicking on a sentence or sentences within the reading passage.

- **Dragging and dropping answer options into “targets” on the screen.** You may be asked to choose an answer from a list and drag it into the appropriate location in a table, paragraph of text, or graphic.

- **Selecting options from a drop-down menu.** This type of question will ask you to select the appropriate answer or answers by selecting options from a drop-down menu (e.g., to complete a sentence).

Remember that with every question, you will get clear instructions on how to respond. See the GACE Computer-delivered Testing Demonstration on the GACE website to learn how a GACE test works and see examples of some of the types of questions you may encounter.

**QUICK TIP ➔** Don’t make the questions more difficult than they are. Don’t read for “hidden meanings” or “tricks.” There are no “trick questions” on the GACE assessments. They are intended to be serious, straightforward tests of your knowledge.

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Understanding Constructed-response Questions

Constructed-response questions require you to demonstrate your knowledge in a subject area by providing in-depth explanations on particular topics. Essay, problem-solving, and oral-response are types of constructed-response questions.

For example, an essay or oral-response question might present you with a topic and ask you to discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the opinion stated. You must support your position with specific reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Take a look at a few sample essay topics:

- “Celebrities have a tremendous influence on the young, and for that reason, they have a responsibility to act as role models.”
- “We are constantly bombarded by advertisements — on television and radio, in newspapers and magazines, on highway signs, and the sides of buses. They have become too pervasive. It’s time to put limits on advertising.”
- “Advances in computer technology have made the classroom unnecessary, since students and teachers are able to communicate with each other from computer terminals at home or at work.”

Keep these things in mind when you respond to a constructed-response question

1) **Answer the question accurately.** Analyze what each part of the question is asking you to do. If the question asks you to describe or discuss, you should provide more than just a list.

2) **Answer the question completely.** If a question asks you to do three distinct things in your response, you should cover all three things for the best score. No matter how well you respond, you will not be awarded full credit if you do not answer the question completely.

3) **Answer the question that is asked.** Do not change the question or challenge the basis of the question. You will receive no credit or a low score if you answer another question or if you state, for example, that there is no possible answer.

4) **Give a thorough and detailed response.** You must demonstrate that you have a thorough understanding of the subject matter. However, your response should be straightforward and not filled with unnecessary information.

5) **If your response is written, reread it.** Check that you have written what you thought you wrote. Be sure not to leave sentences unfinished or omit clarifying information.

**QUICK TIP ➔** Scratch paper and pencils will be provided at the test center. You may find that it helps to take notes on this scratch paper about each of the details of the question so that you don’t miss any of them. Then you’ll be sure to have all of the information you need to answer the question.

For more detailed information on constructed-response scoring, see *Understanding Your GACE® Scores* in the Scores section of the GACE website at [www.gace.ets.org](http://www.gace.ets.org).
GACE Scores

Of course, passing the GACE assessments is important to you, so you need to understand what those scores mean and what the Georgia state standards are.

How do I know if I passed?

All GACE test results, with the exception of the Assessment of Sign Communication – American Sign Language (ASC–ASL), are reported as scaled scores with a scale of 100 to 300. The ASC–ASL is assigned ratings of 1 to 5. Your official score report will indicate how you performed on the test as a whole and whether or not you passed.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For assessments composed of more than one test, you must pass all tests for that assessment to meet the certification requirements.

What Your GACE Scores Mean

You received your score report. Now what does it mean? It’s important to interpret your score report correctly and to know what to do if you have questions about your scores.

Visit the Scores section of the GACE website to see a sample score report and to access Understanding Your GACE® Scores, a document that provides additional information on how to read your score report.

Put your scores in perspective

Your score report indicates:

- the date of the test administration
- your scaled score
- pass/not pass determination
- number of scored questions
- number of questions answered correctly
- number of scored questions in each subarea
- number of questions answered correctly in each subarea
- points possible for constructed-response questions (if your test includes a constructed-response section)
- points earned for constructed-response questions
If an assessment consists of more than one test, the following data will be provided if you have ever taken any of the other tests:

- highest score to date on the test (status, scaled score, and date taken)
- passing status based on the highest scaled score for each of the tests

If you have previously taken the same assessment or other assessments, your score report will also list the highest score you earned on each assessment.

**Score scale changes**

ETS updates GACE assessments on a regular basis to ensure they accurately measure the knowledge and skills that are required for certification. Updated assessments cover the same content as the previous assessments. However, scores might be reported on a different scale, so requirements may vary between the new and previous versions. All scores for previous, discontinued assessments are valid and reportable for 50 years.

*Understanding Your GACE® Scores*, found in the Scores section of the GACE website at [www.gace.ets.org](http://www.gace.ets.org), will help you interpret your scores.
Determine Your Strategy for Success

Effective test preparation doesn't just happen. You'll want to set clear goals and deadlines for yourself along the way. Otherwise, you may not feel ready and confident on test day.

1) Learn what the assessment covers

You may have heard that there are several different versions of the same test. It’s true. You may take one version of the test and your friend may take a different version. Each test has different questions covering the same subject area, but both versions of the test measure the same skills and content knowledge.

You'll find specific information on the test you’re taking in the About the Assessment section of each Study Companion, which outlines the content areas that the test measures and what percentage of the test covers each area. Visit the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org for information on other GACE assessments.

2) Assess how well you know the content

Research shows that test takers tend to overestimate their preparedness — this is why some test takers assume they did well and then are surprised to find out they did not pass.

The GACE assessments are demanding enough to require serious review of likely content, and the longer you’ve been away from the content the more preparation you will most likely need. If it has been longer than a few months since you’ve studied your content area, make a concerted effort to prepare.

3) Collect study materials

Gathering and organizing your materials for review are critical steps in preparing for the GACE assessments. Consider the following reference sources as you plan your study:

- Did you take a course in which the content area was covered?
- Do you still have your books or your notes?
- Does your college library have a good introductory college-level textbook in this area?
- Does your local library have a high school-level textbook?

Study Companions are available for all GACE assessments in the Test Prep section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org. Each Study Companion provides a combination of test preparation and practice, including sample questions and answers with explanations.

4) Plan and organize your time

You can begin to plan and organize your time while you are still collecting materials. Allow yourself plenty of review time to avoid cramming new material at the end. Here are a few tips:

- Choose a test date far enough in the future to leave you plenty of preparation time. See information on test dates on the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org.
- Work backward from that date to figure out how much time you will need for review.
- Set a realistic schedule — and stick to it.

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
5) Practice explaining the key concepts
Those GACE assessments with constructed-response questions assess your ability to explain material effectively. As a teacher, you’ll need to be able to explain concepts and processes to students in a clear, understandable way. What are the major concepts you will be required to teach? Can you explain them in your own words accurately, completely, and clearly? Practice explaining these concepts to test your ability to effectively explain what you know.

6) Understand how questions will be scored
Scoring information can be found in the Scores section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org.

7) Develop a study plan
A study plan provides a roadmap to prepare for the GACE assessments. It can help you understand what skills and knowledge are covered on the test and where to focus your attention. Use the blank study plan template in the back of this Study Companion to organize your efforts.

And most importantly — get started!

Would a Study Group Work for You?

Using this Study Companion as part of a study group
People who have a lot of studying to do sometimes find it helpful to form a study group with others who are working toward the same goal. Study groups give members opportunities to ask questions and get detailed answers. In a group, some members usually have a better understanding of certain topics, while others in the group may be better at other topics. As members take turns explaining concepts to each other, everyone builds self-confidence.

If the group encounters a question that none of the members can answer well, the group can go to a teacher or other expert and get answers efficiently. Because study groups schedule regular meetings, members study in a more disciplined fashion. They also gain emotional support. The group should be large enough so that various people can contribute various kinds of knowledge, but small enough so that it stays focused. Often, three to six members is a good size.

Here are some ways to use this Study Companion as part of a study group:

- **Plan the group’s study program.** Parts of the study plan template can help to structure your group’s study program. By filling out the first five columns and sharing the worksheets, everyone will learn more about your group’s mix of abilities and about the resources, such as textbooks, that members can share with the group. In the sixth column (“Date planned to study this content”), you can create an overall schedule for your group’s study program.

- **Plan individual group sessions.** At the end of each session, the group should decide what specific topics will be covered at the next meeting and who will present each topic. Use the content subareas and objectives in the About the Assessment section to select topics, and then select practice questions.
• **Prepare your presentation for the group.** When it’s your turn to present, prepare something that is more than a lecture. Write two or three original questions to pose to the group. Practicing writing actual questions can help you better understand the topics covered on the test as well as the types of questions you will encounter on the test. It will also give other members of the group extra practice at answering questions.

• **Take a practice test together.** The idea of a practice test is to simulate an actual administration of the test, so scheduling a test session with the group will add to the realism and may also help boost everyone’s confidence. Remember, if you take a practice test, allow only the time that will be allotted for that test on your administration day. You can use the questions in this Study Companion for your practice test.

• **Learn from the results of the practice test.** Check each other’s answers. An answer key for the selected-response questions with explanations for the answers is included in this Study Companion. If your test includes constructed-response questions, look at the constructed-response sample questions, which contain sample responses to those types of questions and shows how they were scored. Then try to follow the same guidelines that the test raters use.
  
  − **Be as critical as you can.** You’re not doing your study partner a favor by letting him or her get away with an answer that does not cover all parts of the question adequately.
  
  − **Be specific.** Write comments that are as detailed as the comments about the sample responses. Indicate where and how your study partner is doing an inadequate job of answering the question. Writing notes for your study partner may also help.
  
  − **Be supportive.** Include comments that point out what your study partner got right and that therefore earned them points.

Then plan one or more study sessions based on aspects of the questions on which group members did not perform well. For example, each group member might be responsible for rewriting one paragraph of a response in which someone else did an inadequate job.

Whether you decide to study alone or with a group, remember that the best way to prepare is to have an organized plan. The plan you follow should set goals based on specific topics and skills that you need to learn, and it should commit you to a realistic set of deadlines for meeting these goals. Then you need to discipline yourself to stick with your plan and accomplish your goals on schedule.
Develop Your Study Plan

Developing a study plan helps you prepare for the GACE assessments. A blank study plan worksheet is available in the back of this Study Companion. You can use this worksheet to:

1. **Define Content Areas**: List the most important content areas for your test as defined in About the Assessment beginning on page 26.

2. **Determine Strengths and Weaknesses**: Identify where you have thorough understanding and where you need additional study in each content area.

3. **Identify Resources**: Identify the books, courses, and other resources you plan to use to study for each content area.

4. **Study**: Create and commit to a schedule that provides for regular study periods.

Below is an example of a completed study plan that may help you get started with your own.

**GACE Test Name:** Reading  
**GACE Test Code:** 117  
**I am taking the test on:** October 25, 2014

### Literal Comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content covered</th>
<th>Description of content</th>
<th>How well do I know the content? (scale 1-5)</th>
<th>What resources do I have/need for studying this content?</th>
<th>Where can I find the resources I need?</th>
<th>Date planned to study this content</th>
<th>Date completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Ideas</td>
<td>Identify summaries or paraphrases of main idea or primary purpose of reading section</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Middle school English text book</td>
<td>College library, middle school teacher</td>
<td>9/15/14</td>
<td>9/15/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Ideas</td>
<td>Identify summaries or paraphrases of supporting ideas and specific details in reading selection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Middle school English text book</td>
<td>College library, middle school teacher</td>
<td>9/17/14</td>
<td>9/17/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Identify how reading selection is organized in terms of cause/effect and compare/ contrast</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Middle and high school English text book</td>
<td>College library, middle and high school teachers</td>
<td>9/20/14</td>
<td>9/21/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Identify key transition words/phrases in reading selection and how used</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Middle and high school English text book</td>
<td>College library, middle and high school teachers</td>
<td>9/25/14</td>
<td>9/26/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary in Context</td>
<td>Identify meanings of words as used in context of reading selection</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Middle and high school English text book, dictionary</td>
<td>College library, middle and high school teachers</td>
<td>9/25/14</td>
<td>9/27/14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content covered</th>
<th>Description of content</th>
<th>How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)</th>
<th>What resources do I have/need for studying this content?</th>
<th>Where can I find the resources I need?</th>
<th>Date planned to study this content</th>
<th>Date completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Determine whether evidence strengthens, weakens, or is relevant to arguments in reading selection</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor</td>
<td>10/1/14</td>
<td>10/1/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Determine role that an idea, reference, or piece of information plays in author’s discussion/argument</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor</td>
<td>10/1/14</td>
<td>10/1/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Determine if information presented is fact or opinion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor</td>
<td>10/1/14</td>
<td>10/1/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Identify relationship among ideas presented in reading selection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor</td>
<td>10/1/14</td>
<td>10/1/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferential</td>
<td>Determine logical assumptions on which argument or conclusion is based</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, middle and high school teachers</td>
<td>10/8/14</td>
<td>10/8/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning</td>
<td>Determine author's attitude toward materials discussed in reading selection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, middle and high school teachers</td>
<td>10/8/14</td>
<td>10/8/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferential</td>
<td>Determine author's attitude toward materials discussed in reading selection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, middle and high school teachers</td>
<td>10/17/14</td>
<td>10/18/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning</td>
<td>Recognize or predict ideas/situations that are extensions of, or similar to, what has been presented in reading selection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, middle and high school teachers</td>
<td>10/17/14</td>
<td>10/18/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalization</td>
<td>Draw conclusions from materials presented in reading selection</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, middle and high school teachers</td>
<td>10/23/14</td>
<td>10/23/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalization</td>
<td>Apply ideas presented in a reading selection to other situations</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>High school textbook, college course notes</td>
<td>College library, middle and high school teachers</td>
<td>10/23/14</td>
<td>10/23/14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Review Smart Tips for Success

Learn from the experts. Take advantage of these answers to questions you may have and practical tips to help you navigate the GACE assessment and make the best use of your time.

Should I guess?
Yes. Your score is based on the number of questions you answer correctly, with no penalty or subtraction for an incorrect answer. When you don’t know the answer to a question, try to eliminate any obviously wrong answers and then guess at the correct one. Try to pace yourself so that you have enough time to carefully consider every question.

Can I answer the questions in any order?
Yes. You can go through the questions from beginning to end, as many test takers do, or you can create your own path. Perhaps you will want to answer questions in your strongest area of knowledge first and then move from your strengths to your weaker areas. You can use the “Mark” function to note a question you want to come back to later. There is no right or wrong way; use the approach that works best for you.

Are there trick questions on the test?
No. There are no hidden meanings or trick wording. All of the questions on the test ask about subject matter knowledge in a straightforward manner.

Are there answer patterns on the test?
No. You might have heard this myth: The answers on selected-response tests follow patterns. Another myth is that there will never be more than two questions with the same lettered answer following each other. Neither myth is true. Select the answer you think is correct based on your knowledge of the subject.

Can I write on the scratch paper I am given?
Yes. You can work out problems on the scratch paper provided to you by the test administrator, make notes to yourself, or write anything at all. You may use your scratch paper in any way that is useful to you, but be sure to enter your final answers on the computer. Your scratch paper will be destroyed after you are finished with the assessment.

Smart Tips for Taking the Test
1. **Skip the questions you find extremely difficult.** Rather than trying to answer these on your first pass through the test, leave them blank and mark them. Pay attention to the time as you answer the rest of the questions on the test, and try to finish with 10 or 15 minutes remaining so that you can go back over the questions you left blank. Even if you don’t know the answer the second time you read the questions, see if you can narrow down the possible answers, and then guess.

2. **Keep track of the time.** Keep an eye on the timer located in the upper right-hand corner of the computer screen, and be aware of how much time you have left to complete your test. You will probably have plenty of time to answer all of the questions, but if you find yourself becoming stuck on one question, you might decide to move on and return to that question later.
3. **Read all of the possible answers before selecting one.** Then, reread the question to be sure the answer you have selected really answers the question. Remember, a question that contains a phrase such as “Which of the following does NOT …” is asking for the one answer that is NOT a correct statement or conclusion.

4. **Check your answers.** If you have extra time left over at the end of the test, look over each question and make sure that you have answered it as you intended. Many test takers make careless mistakes that they could have corrected if they had checked their answers.

5. **Don’t worry about your score when you are taking the test.** No one is expected to answer all of the questions correctly. Your score on this test is not analogous to your score on other similar-looking (but in fact very different!) tests. It doesn’t matter on the GACE assessments whether you score very high or barely pass. If you meet the minimum passing scores along with any other requirements for obtaining teaching certification, you will receive a license. In other words, what matters is meeting the minimum passing score.

6. **Use your energy to take the test, not to get angry at it.** Getting angry at the test only increases stress and decreases the likelihood that you will do your best. Highly qualified educators and test development professionals, all with backgrounds in teaching and educational leadership, worked diligently to make the test a fair and valid measure of your knowledge and skills. The best thing to do is concentrate on answering the questions.
Check on Testing Accommodations

What if I have a disability or health-related need?

If you have a disability or health-related need, you may wish to apply for testing accommodations. ETS is committed to serving test takers with disabilities or health-related needs by providing services and accommodations that are reasonable and appropriate given the purpose of the test. Testing accommodations are available for test takers with disabilities or health-related needs who meet ETS requirements. If you are requesting testing accommodations, you must register by mail or fax through ETS Disability Services and have your accommodations approved before you register to test.

The 2013–14 Bulletin Supplement for Test Takers with Disabilities or Health-related Needs for GACE® assessments contains contact information, procedures for requesting testing accommodations, and registration forms. The Supplement should be used in conjunction with the information in the GACE Registration Bulletin. The Supplement and the Registration Bulletin can both be downloaded free of charge from the Testing Accommodations section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org.

Disability documentation policy statements and forms are available through the ETS website at www.ets.org/disabilities/documentation. You should also see Tips for Test Takers with Disabilities at www.ets.org/disabilities/tips.
Do Your Best on Test Day

You followed your study plan. You are ready for the test. Now it’s time to prepare for test day.

Plan to end your review a day or two before the actual test date so you avoid cramming. Take a dry run to the test center so you’re sure of the route, traffic conditions, and parking. Most of all, you want to eliminate any unexpected factors that could distract you from your ultimate goal — passing the GACE assessment!

On the day of the test, you should:

• be well-rested
• wear comfortable clothes and dress in layers
• eat before you take the test to keep your energy level up
• bring valid and acceptable identification with you that contains your name, signature, and photograph
• be prepared to stand in line to check in or to wait while other test takers check in
• select a seat away from doors, aisles, and other high-traffic areas

You can’t control the testing situation, but you can control yourself. Stay calm. Test administrators are well trained and make every effort to provide uniform testing conditions, but don’t let it bother you if the test doesn’t start exactly on time. You will be given the necessary amount of time once it does start.

You can think of preparing for this test as training for an athletic event. Once you’ve trained, prepared, and rested, give it everything you’ve got.

What items am I restricted from bringing into the test center?

You may not bring personal items into the test center such as:

• cell phones, smartphones (e.g., Android™, BlackBerry®, iPhone®), tablets, PDAs, and other electronic, listening, recording, or photographic devices
• handbags, knapsacks, or briefcases
• food or snacks of any kind
• water bottles or canned or bottled beverages
• study materials, books, or notes
• pens, pencils, and scratch paper (the test administrator will provide pencils and scratch paper)
• tobacco
• weapons of any kind

NOTE: All cell phones, smartphones, tablets, PDAs, and other electronic, listening, recording, or photographic devices are strictly prohibited at the test center. If you are found to be in
possession of any of these devices before, during, or after the test administration, your device may be inspected and/or confiscated, and you will be dismissed from the test. Your test scores will be canceled, and you will forfeit your test fees. For more information on what you can bring to the test center, visit the On Test Day section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org.

Are You Ready?
Review this list to determine if you’re ready to take your assessment.

- Do you know the Georgia testing requirements for your teaching field?
- Have you followed all of the test registration procedures?
- Do you know the topics that will be covered in each assessment you plan to take?
- Have you reviewed any textbooks, class notes, and course readings that relate to the topics covered?
- Do you know how long the assessment will take and the number of questions it contains?
- Have you considered how you will pace your work?
- Are you familiar with the types of questions that you may encounter during your assessment?
- Are you familiar with the recommended test-taking strategies?
- Have you practiced by working through the practice questions in the Study Companion?
- If constructed-response questions are part of your test, do you understand the scoring criteria for these items?
- If you are repeating a GACE assessment, have you analyzed your previous score report to determine areas where additional study and test preparation could be useful?

If you answered “yes” to the questions above, your preparation has paid off. Now take the GACE assessment, do your best, pass it — and begin your teaching career!
Other Questions You May Have

Here is some supplemental information that can give you a better understanding of the GACE assessments.

What is the purpose of the GACE assessments?

The purpose of the GACE assessments is to assure that candidates have the knowledge and skills needed to perform the job of an educator in Georgia public schools. The GACE assessments are aligned with state and national standards for educator preparation and with state standards for the P–12 student curriculum — the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) — and the content standards for Georgia’s state-approved educator preparation programs. In other words, each GACE assessment was developed by Georgia educators to measure competency on what is taught in Georgia’s P-12 classrooms.

Who developed the GACE assessments?

Each GACE assessment was developed with diverse representation of Georgia educators from across the state, including the participation of committees of Georgia educators, educator preparation faculty, and other content and assessment specialists. This included individuals from school systems, local schools, institutions of higher education (public and private), and other stakeholders.

What do the GACE assessments measure?

Each GACE assessment consists of one or more tests designed to assess a candidate’s knowledge and skills as required by the guidelines for Georgia educator certification.

Do some GACE assessments have more than one test?

Yes. Some GACE assessments do consist of more than one test. You may take each individual test at separate administrations, or for assessments that offer a combined test format, you may take the combined version at one administration. You must pass all tests within an assessment to achieve certification.

What is certification?

Certification in any area — medicine, law, architecture, accounting, cosmetology, or education — is an assurance to the public that the person holding the certification possesses sufficient knowledge and skills to perform important occupational activities safely and effectively. In the case of teacher certification, a certification tells the public that the individual has met predefined competency standards for beginning teaching practice.

Because certification makes such a serious claim about its holder, certification tests are usually quite demanding. In some fields, certification tests have more than one part and last for more than one day. Candidates for certification in all fields plan intensive study as part of their professional preparation. Some join study groups, while others study alone. Preparing to take a certification test is, in all cases, a professional activity. Because it assesses the entire body of knowledge for the field you are entering, preparing for a certification exam takes planning, discipline, and sustained effort.
How are the assessments updated to ensure the content remains current?

GACE assessments are reviewed regularly. During the first phase of review, ETS conducts an analysis of relevant state and association standards and of the current test content. State certification areas and the results of any relevant job analysis are also considered. If these reviews indicate that the test content needs to be updated, a state advisory committee is convened to develop revised test content specifications. New test questions are then produced following the standard test development methodology.

How long will it take to receive my scores?

Unofficial scores for tests that contain only selected-response questions can be viewed at the conclusion of the test. Official scores for these tests are reported approximately four weeks later.

Score reporting dates for all testing windows can be found in the Scores section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org and in the Registration Bulletin.

Can I access my scores online?

Viewing your scores is easy — simply log in to your ETS GACE testing account on the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org and click on your score report.
About the Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Name</th>
<th>Middle Grades Language Arts</th>
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<td>4–8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test Code</td>
<td>011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Testing Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test Duration</td>
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<td>Number of Selected-response Questions</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Constructed-response Questions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Format</td>
<td>Computer delivered</td>
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The GACE Middle Grades Language Arts assessment is designed to measure the professional knowledge of prospective teachers of English Language Arts in middle schools in the state of Georgia.

The testing time is the amount of time you will have to answer the questions on the test. Test duration includes time for tutorials and directional screens that may be included in the test.

The questions in this assessment assess both basic knowledge across content areas and the ability to apply principles.

The total number of questions that are scored is typically smaller than the total number of questions on the test. Most tests that contain selected-response questions also include embedded pretest questions, which are not used in calculating your score. By including pretest questions in the assessment, ETS is able to analyze actual test-taker performance on proposed new questions and determine whether they should be included in future versions of the test.
Content Specifications

Each test in this assessment is organized into content subareas. Each subarea is further defined by a set of objectives and their knowledge statements.

- The objectives broadly define what an entry-level educator in this field in Georgia public schools should know and be able to do.
- The knowledge statements describe in greater detail the knowledge and skills eligible for testing.
- Some tests also include content material at the evidence level. This content serves as descriptors of what each knowledge statement encompasses.

The following is a breakdown of the subareas and objectives for the tests in this assessment.
## Test Subareas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subarea</th>
<th>Approx. Percentage of Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Reading</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Writing, Speaking, and Listening</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Language Use and Vocabulary</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Analysis (constructed-response only)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Test Objectives

### Subarea I: Reading

**Objective 1: Understands how to critically read, comprehend, and interpret literature**

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Knows the major works, authors, and contexts of United States (specifically Georgia authors) and world literature that are appropriate for adolescents

B. Understands the defining characteristics of literary genres; e.g., poetry, literary nonfiction, drama

C. Knows the defining characteristics of major subgenres; e.g., sonnet, historical fiction, functional text

D. Understands how literal and inferential interpretations of a literary text can be supported with textual evidence

E. Understands how a theme is developed within and across works from a wide variety of literary genres and other media.

F. Understands how literary elements (e.g., characterization, setting, plot development) contribute to the meaning of a text

G. Understands how word choice (e.g., figurative language, connotative, or informal language) contribute to the meaning and tone of a text

H. Understands how poetic devices and structure contribute to the meaning of a poem

**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Objective 2: Understands how to critically read, comprehend, and interpret informational text

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Understands how literal and inferential interpretations of an informational text can be supported with textual evidence
B. Knows a variety of organizational patterns that can be used to develop a central idea in an informational text
C. Understands how word choice (e.g., figurative, connotative, or technical language) contributes to the meaning and tone of an informational text
D. Understands methods that authors use to convey purpose and perspective in informational texts
E. Understands methods that authors use in informational texts to appeal to a specific audience
F. Understands how authors develop and support a written argument in an informational text
G. Knows how to interpret media and non-print texts and how they influence an audience

Objective 3: Knows how commonly used research-based reading strategies support comprehension

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Knows commonly used research-based strategies for reading instruction; e.g., activating prior knowledge, modeling metacognitive practices, active reading
B. Understands how reading strategies (e.g., making predictions, making connections, summarizing) support comprehension

Subarea II: Writing, Speaking, and Listening

Objective 1: Understands the fundamental characteristics of writing, including research practices

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Understands the distinct characteristics of various types of writing; e.g., argumentative, informative/explanatory, narrative
B. Understands that effective writing is appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
C. Understands the characteristics of clear and coherent writing; e.g., supporting details, organization, conventions
D. Knows effective and ethical research practices, including evaluating the credibility of multiple print and digital sources, gathering relevant information, and citing sources accurately

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Objective 2: Understands the components of effective oral communication

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Understands the components of effective speech and presentation delivery
B. Understands the components of effective oral communication in a variety of settings; e.g., one-on-one, in groups

Objective 3: Understands how to incorporate teaching approaches, assessment, and diversity into classroom instruction

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Understands commonly used research-based approaches to teaching components of writing
B. Understands purposes and methods of assessing reading, writing, speaking, and listening
C. Knows that students bring various perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds to reading, writing, listening, and speaking and knows how to incorporate that awareness into classroom instruction

Subarea III: Language Use and Vocabulary

Objective 1: Understands language use, the conventions of standard English, and vocabulary acquisition

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Understands the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, syntax, and mechanics; e.g., sentence types, verb tenses, punctuation
B. Understands the use of affixes, context, and syntax to determine word meaning
C. Is familiar with variation in dialect and diction across regions, cultural groups, and time periods

Objective 2: Knows instructional approaches to support correct language usage and language and vocabulary development.

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Understands the use of print and digital reference materials to support correct language usage
B. Knows commonly used research-based approaches for supporting language acquisition and vocabulary development for diverse learners

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Subarea IV: Analysis

Objective 1: Understands how to critically read, comprehend, and interpret literature

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Understands how literary elements (e.g., characterization, setting, plot development) contribute to the meaning of a text.

B. Understands how word choice (e.g., figurative language, connotative, or informal language) contributes to the meaning and tone of a text.

Objective 2: Understands how to incorporate teaching approaches, assessment, and diversity into classroom instruction

The beginning Language Arts teacher:

A. Understands commonly used research-based approaches to teaching components of writing

B. Knows that students bring various perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds to reading, writing, listening, and speaking and knows how to incorporate that awareness into classroom instruction

C. Understands purposes and methods of assessing reading, writing, speaking, and listening
Approaches to Answering Selected-response Questions

The purpose of this section is to describe selected-response question formats that you will typically see on the GACE assessments and to suggest possible ways to approach thinking about and answering them. These approaches are intended to supplement and complement familiar test-taking strategies with which you may already be comfortable and that work for you. Fundamentally, the most important component in ensuring your success is familiarity with the content that is covered on the assessment. This content has been carefully selected to align with the knowledge required to begin a career as a teacher in the state of Georgia.

The questions on this assessment are designed to assess your knowledge of the content described in the subareas and objectives in each test. In most cases, you are expected to demonstrate more than just your ability to recall factual information. You may be asked to think critically about the information, to analyze it, to compare it with other knowledge you have, or to make a judgment about it.

When you are ready to respond, you must choose one of the answer options listed. You may also encounter some questions that use alternate response types; e.g., questions that require you to select multiple options, enter a numeric answer into a text box, or drag-and-drop options. Be sure to read the directions carefully to ensure that you know what is required for each test question. Leave no questions unanswered. Questions for which you mark no answer are counted as incorrect. Your score will be determined by the number of questions for which you select the correct answer.
Question Formats

You may see the following types of questions on the test:

- Single Questions
- Clustered Questions

On the following pages, you will find descriptions of these commonly used question formats, along with suggested approaches for responding to each type.

Single Questions

The single-question format presents a direct question or an incomplete statement. It can also include a reading passage, a graphic, a table, or a combination of these features. The answer options appear below the question.

The following question is an example of the single-question format.

Example

Which of the following is the most important consideration for students and teachers with regard to students’ use of the Internet as a research tool?

A. The name of a website does not always give a clear indication of the contents of the site.
B. The rapid expansion of the Internet makes it difficult to obtain the very latest information on a given topic.
C. Different search engines use different formulas for matching websites to search strings.
D. Much of the information on the Internet has not been reviewed and verified by experts in relevant fields.

Suggested Approach

Read the question carefully and critically. Think about what the question is asking and the situation it is describing. Eliminate any obviously wrong answers, select the correct answer choice, and mark your answer.

The question in the example above addresses students’ use of the Internet as a research tool. Since there are few controls over what information may be posted on the Internet and by whom, information obtained through this medium cannot be assumed to be accurate. Therefore, students who are using the Internet as a research tool must be made aware of the importance of consulting sources that have been reviewed by experts to verify the accuracy of any information obtained. Therefore, option D is the single best answer.
With regard to the other responses, it is true that the name of a website may not accurately represent the information it presents (option A), and it is also true that search engines use different formulas for matching websites to search strings (option C). While these issues may affect the ease of locating information, they are not relevant to the more critical issue of accuracy. With regard to option B, the question of whether students have located the very latest information, which may or may not be substantiated, is less important than whether they have consulted a variety of up-to-date, accurate resources in a variety of media.

**Clustered Questions**

Clustered questions are made up of a stimulus and two or more questions relating to the stimulus. The stimulus material may be a reading passage, a sample of student work, a description of a student and/or program, a graphic, a table, or any other information needed to answer the questions that follow.

You can use several different approaches to respond to clustered questions. Some commonly used strategies are listed below.

**Strategy 1**  
Skim the stimulus material to understand its purpose, its arrangement, and/or its content. Then read the questions and refer again to the stimulus material to obtain the specific information you need to answer the questions.

**Strategy 2**  
Read the questions *before* considering the stimulus material. The theory behind this strategy is that the content of the questions will help you identify the purpose of the stimulus material and locate the information you need to answer the questions.

**Strategy 3**  
Use a combination of both strategies. Apply the “read the stimulus first” strategy with shorter, more familiar stimuli and the “read the questions first” strategy with longer, more complex, or less familiar stimuli. You can experiment with the sample questions in this Study Companion and then use the strategy with which you are most comfortable when you take the actual test.

Regardless of which strategy you choose, you should read the stimulus carefully and critically. You may want to note its important points to help you answer the questions.

As you consider questions set in educational contexts, try to enter into the identified teacher’s frame of mind and use that teacher’s point of view to answer the questions that accompany the stimulus. Be sure to consider the questions only in terms of the information provided in the stimulus — not in terms of your own experiences or individuals you may have known.
Example
First read the stimulus (a description of a class activity planned by a teacher).

Use the information below to answer the questions that follow.

A science teacher and a computer teacher work with the same group of eighth graders. The teachers will be addressing some related content with these students, so they agree to create an interdisciplinary unit with coordinated instruction between the two classes.

Now you are prepared to address the first of the two questions associated with this stimulus.

1. The teachers begin planning the interdisciplinary unit by deciding on student learning goals that both teachers will emphasize in their classrooms. Before beginning the unit, the teachers should answer which of the following questions to ensure the unit is as effective and well coordinated as possible?

A. How should the topic coverage be sequenced and paced during the unit?
B. How much time should be devoted to individual, small-group, and whole-class instruction during the unit?
C. What methods should be communicated with parents about learning expectations?
D. What presentation methods and teaching styles should be used during the unit?

Suggested Approach
Read the question carefully and critically. Think about the question that is being asked. Eliminate any obviously wrong answers, select the correct answer choice, and mark your answer.

This question tests understanding of effective collaborative practices. The teachers have agreed on their learning goals for students. Now they need to agree on the sequence and pace of instruction (option A) so that students will be able to build on previously presented content as new content is taught. Students will be much more likely to understand the topic of any given lesson if they are able to fit the new information into a framework of existing knowledge. Therefore, option A is the single best answer.

None of the other responses addresses ways to coordinate instruction effectively. Once the teachers have agreed on student learning goals and on the sequence and pace of topic coverage, students will be able to benefit from instruction whether or not the teachers coordinate their grouping practices (option B) or employ similar presentation methods and teaching styles (option D). With regard to option C, communicating learning expectations with parents is irrelevant to how well the two teachers are coordinated.
Now you are ready to answer the second question.

2. The teachers wish to ensure that their unit will proceed smoothly. They can most likely achieve this goal by using which of the following strategies?

A. Create a plan before the unit begins specifying the learning activities that will occur in each teacher’s classroom each day
B. Make arrangements to meet on a regular basis to discuss how the unit is progressing and to address any issues that may arise
C. Identify before the unit begins any teacher tasks that will need to be performed during the unit and assign each task to a teacher
D. Make arrangements to collaboratively create all lesson plans that will be used in both classrooms throughout the unit

Suggested Approach

Again, carefully consider the information presented in the stimulus, and then read the second question, which focuses on the principles of effective collaboration in an interdisciplinary teaching situation. Ongoing communication is essential so that the teachers can share information about and identify ways to address such issues as unanticipated directions students’ interests have taken, concepts students are having trouble with, and so forth. Establishing a regular meeting schedule to discuss progress and make necessary adjustments (option B) is an effective means of ensuring that such communication will occur. Therefore, **option B is the single best answer.**

None of the other strategies listed would facilitate the ongoing exchange of information necessary to address issues that arise as the unit proceeds. Because teachers are unlikely to accurately predict the specific issues that will arise during a unit, brainstorming teacher responses prior to beginning the unit (option A) would most likely be an inefficient use of planning time. Jointly creating all lesson plans in advance (option D) would not allow the flexibility necessary to adapt activities and lessons to changing circumstances and would also require a large and unnecessary investment of the teachers’ time. While identifying and assigning specific teacher roles ahead of time (option C) might increase efficiency, it would not enhance the teachers’ ability to address student learning issues effectively as they arise.
Practice Questions

This section presents some sample questions for you to review as part of your preparation for the assessment. You will probably find it helpful to simulate actual testing conditions. A correct answer and a rationale for each sample test question can be found in the section following the sample questions.

Keep in mind that the test you take at an actual administration will have different questions, although the proportion of questions in each subarea will be approximately the same. You should not expect the percentage of questions you answer correctly in these practice questions to be exactly the same as when you take the test at an actual administration, since numerous factors affect a person's performance in any given testing situation.

The sample questions are included to illustrate some of the formats and types of questions you will see on the test; however, your performance on the sample questions should not be viewed as a predictor of your performance on the actual test.

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

1. __________ is a narrative that takes abstract ideas of behavior — good or bad, wise or foolish — and attempts to make them concrete and striking. The chief actor in these stories is usually an animal or inanimate object that behaves like a human and engages in a single significant act intended to teach a moral lesson.

Which of the following will correctly complete the passage above?

A. A myth  
B. A fable  
C. An epic  
D. A legend

Answer and Rationale

2. Science fiction: readers claim to either love it or loathe it; either they avoid it like poison or they devour favorite works and authors like chocolate addicts gulping down fudge truffles.

The author of the passage compares certain readers with “chocolate addicts” primarily in order to

A. suggest that science fiction is not a serious literary genre.  
B. indicate the depth of certain readers' feelings about science fiction.  
C. explain why some readers consider science fiction to be dangerous.  
D. contrast the characteristics of science fiction with those of other literary genres.

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select ”Previous View” to go back to original text.
3. All of us find or invent our language. We may come up with new sentences never heard before. We may use words in a unique way. But we are always finding our voice, locating old patterns or long-heard expressions, reaching into our thesaurus for the right term. And in inventing English, we are always inventing ourselves — finding our place among the welter of the words or in the swell of sounds that is the ocean of our tongue.

Which of the following most accurately describes how the author's use of point of view works as a rhetorical strategy?

A. He speaks in the first person to invite the readers to see how they participate in the activities he describes
B. He speaks in the first person to emphasize his unique experience with the subject under discussion
C. He speaks in the third person to highlight the universality of the topic being discussed
D. He speaks in the third person to construct a more authoritative position from which to argue his point

Answer and Rationale

4. If atoms are the letters of the chemical language, then molecules are the words. But in order to put the chemical letters together to form chemical words, we have to know something about the rules of chemical spelling.

In the passage above, a discussion of atoms is introduced by

A. an analogy.
B. an aphorism.
C. an example.
D. a hypothesis.

Answer and Rationale
Questions 5-8 refer to the following two poems.

Spellbound

by Emily Brontë

The night is darkening round me,
The wild winds coldly blow;
But a tyrant spell has bound me
And I cannot, cannot go.

Line

5 The giant trees are bending
Their bare boughs weighed with snow.
And the storm is fast descending,
And yet I cannot go.

Clouds beyond clouds above me,
Wastes beyond wastes below;
But nothing drear can move me;
I will not, cannot go.

Approach of Winter

by William Carlos Williams

The half-stripped trees
struck by a wind together,
bending all,

Line

5 the leaves flutter drily
and refuse to let go
or driven like hail
stream bitterly out to one side
and fall
where the salvias, hard carmine,—

10 like no leaf that ever was—
edge the bare garden.
5. Which of the following interpretations best applies to both poems?

A. They portray winter as a time of waiting for the first signs of spring
B. They liken the coming of winter to the shock of sudden death
C. They describe acts of resistance against the powerful force of winter
D. They relate the harshness of winter to the darkness of night

Answer and Rationale

6. In “Spellbound,” the speaker’s change in tone from the first to the third stanza can best be described as shifting from

A. helpless to stubborn.
B. apathetic to passionate.
C. despondent to hopeful.
D. agitated to complacent.

Answer and Rationale

7. Which of the following statements best describes how the structure of “Spellbound” contributes to its meaning?

A. The use of rhyming quatrains contrasts with the chaos of the storm.
B. The use of blank verse strengthens the effect of the “tyrant spell.”
C. The breaks between stanzas symbolize moments of regret.
D. The lack of internal punctuation reflects a sense of anticipation.

Answer and Rationale

8. Which of the following literary devices is present in “Approach of Winter”?

A. Allusion
B. Repetition
C. Oxymoron
D. Personification

Answer and Rationale
9. Each of the following is an important part of guided reading EXCEPT

A. The teacher should use texts that challenge students' current reading levels.
B. It is used to help students become independent readers.
C. It is used to help students learn various reading strategies.
D. Students are grouped homogeneously based on reading ability.

**Answer and Rationale**

10. A teacher is working with an eighth-grade student who reads at the fifth-grade level. When the student encounters an unknown word, “cohabit,” the teacher breaks the word into parts and has the student determine the meaning of “co” and the meaning of “habit,” using words with the same prefix or root, such as “coworker” and “habitat.”

The activity described above relies most directly on knowledge of which of the following language concepts?

A. Morphemes
B. Synonyms
C. Phonemes
D. Orthography

**Answer and Rationale**

11. A teacher asks students to predict the outcome of a story. After students consider their predictions silently for one minute, they tell them to a partner. Then some students volunteer to describe their predictions to the class.

During the activity, the students are using which of the following reading comprehension strategies?

A. Anticipation guide
B. Reciprocal teaching
C. Shared reading
D. Think-pair-share

**Answer and Rationale**

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
12. An article describes a method of writing instruction in which “children are in different stages of the writing process, working on self-selected topics. Simultaneously, teachers are meeting with individual or small groups of students to confer and help move them along with their writing. Other components include peer conferences and/or response groups.”

The article best describes which of the following teaching models?

A. Writer’s workshop
B. Direct instruction
C. Literature circles
D. Shared writing

Answer and Rationale

13. Mr. Mansour wants his students to use a wiki when collaborating on a group research project. Which of the following statements describes the main benefit of using a wiki as an educational tool for a collaborative research project?

A. Wikis provide an opportunity for students to develop memory skills, which are essential for effective collaboration.
B. Wikis are accessible off-line, making it easier for students and instructors to access content at any time.
C. Wikis provide storage for information that will not be edited, making them ideal for final presentations.
D. Wikis engage diverse learners by allowing for the inclusion of various media to support a given task.

Answer and Rationale
Questions 14-16 refer to the following student draft.

A seventh-grade class is learning how to respond to literary analysis prompts. The following is a student response to the prompt “Describe the significance of the White Rabbit in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, by Lewis Carroll.”

(1) The White Rabbit represents an adult who worries about schedules; he says, “Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it’s getting!” (2) Alice wanders after the rabbit down the hole because, unknown to her, she wishes to not be a child anymore, she wants to be an adult. (3) When she follows the rabbit down the hole, she makes the choice to transform into an adult and leave her childish ways behind. (4) She begins her journey to Wonderland confused about all of her choices. (5) The author uses The White Rabbit as a metaphor to contrast with the childish ways Alice is leaving behind. (6) Her choices are like the choices she will have to make as she gets older.

14. Which of the following revisions will best improve the clarity of the response?

   A. Switch sentence 1 and sentence 5
   B. Switch sentence 2 and sentence 3
   C. Switch sentence 4 and sentence 6
   D. Switch sentence 5 and sentence 6

   Answer and Rationale

15. In sentence 1, which of the following words or phrases, inserted before “he says,” provides the best transition between the first clause and the quotation?

   A. similarly,
   B. for instance,
   C. first of all,
   D. namely,

   Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
16. Which of the following errors is present in sentence 2?
   A. Comma splice
   B. Faulty parallelism
   C. Incorrect subject-verb agreement
   D. Inconsistent verb tense.

**Answer and Rationale**

17. Though Josh mentioned that she was a good friend, Anna knew it was a hollow compliment.

   In the sentence above, the word “hollow” is best defined as
   A. deep.
   B. sunken.
   C. vicious.
   D. insincere.

**Answer and Rationale**

18. My sister and I always loved sledding down the hill behind our house.

   The underlined word in the sentence above is an example of
   A. a conjunction.
   B. a participle.
   C. a gerund.
   D. an adverb.

**Answer and Rationale**
# Answer Key and Rationales

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<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Correct Answer</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Option B is correct.</strong> The statements on which the question is based constitute a definition of a fable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Option B is correct.</strong> The author makes a comparison between science fiction readers and people who love chocolate so much they could be called addicts in order to stress that those who like science fiction cannot get enough of it.</td>
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<td>Back to Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> In first-person point of view, the author or narrator writes from his or her own perspective. In this passage, the author uses the words &quot;we&quot; and &quot;our&quot; to suggest that his experience is similar to the reader’s experience, and invites readers to understand how people invent themselves through the words they use.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> By suggesting that atoms are like letters, the author of the passage has used an analogy; i.e., the author has characterized one thing by reference to another thing that functions in a similar way.</td>
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<td>Back to Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>Option C is correct.</strong> Brontë refers to the “giant trees” bending (line 5), and then writes “yet I cannot go.” She goes on, “But nothing drear can move me; / I will not, cannot go.” Brontë references the bending trees as evidence of the storm’s force. At the beginning of the poem she is yielding to the storm, but finds her strength at the end with the statement “I will not, cannot go.” William Carlos Williams also refers to “The half-stripped trees / struck by a wind together, / bending all, “whose leaves refuse to let go,” and later contrasts the near-barren trees with carmine-colored salvia plants, which symbolize life at the edge of the garden.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> The speaker’s change in tone is most evident in lines 4 and 12. The speaker begins by saying that she “cannot, cannot go” (line 4), indicating that her actions are dictated by an outside force. She ends by saying she “will not, cannot go” (line 12). By saying she will not go, she is asserting an ownership over her actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> The repeating rhyming quatrains are regular and predictable in form; however, the content of the poem — the spell and the storm — is neither predictable nor regular. This pairing of structure and irregularity serves to highlight the impact that the spell has on the speaker as well as her desire to regain control of her environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> Personification involves giving human traits to nonliving things. Line 5 states that the leaves “refuse to let go,” personifying the leaves and making them seem as if they are making the choice not to let go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> During guided reading, students are placed into small groups according to their individual reading levels. The teacher observes as students read. The teacher then gives students the opportunity to use various reading strategies. The ultimate goal of guided reading is to enable students to read successfully on their own. Option A is not an important part of guided reading because the teacher selects texts that students can read with 90 percent accuracy; it is not the intent of guided reading to select books that are beyond students' current reading levels.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> Knowledge of morphemes is knowledge of the affixes, combing forms, and root words. This knowledge builds vocabulary, and it is necessary for the kind of word analysis described in the activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> Think-pair-share is a strategy in which the student first thinks of an answer and then shares the answer with a partner for input and confidence in their answers. After sharing with a partner, the student may or may not want to share with the class. This strategy strengthens student confidence in answers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question Number</td>
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<td>Rationale</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> The important features of writer’s workshop are listed in the stimulus: 1. Students are progressing at various rates. 2. Teachers are conferencing. 3. Peer conferencing is also occurring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> The wiki platform allows users to load text, images, video, sound, and external links to support a given task. This capability helps wikis to support a variety of learning styles, such as visual-spatial, interpersonal, and linguistic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> Sentence 6 is most appropriate after sentence 4 because it clarifies why Alice is confused about the choices she must make in Wonderland. Sentence 5 is an appropriate conclusion because it ties back to the thesis stated in sentence 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Option B is correct.</strong> It signals that the quotation illustrates the kind of worry described in the first clause.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> The comma between “anymore” and “she wants” is a comma splice; it is used incorrectly to separate two independent clauses.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> The use of the word “though” in the phrase, “Though Josh mentioned that she was a good friend,” indicates that the compliment was not sincere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>Option C is correct.</strong> In this sentence, the word &quot;sledding&quot; is a gerund, a verb form (the present participle) functioning as a noun.</td>
</tr>
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**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.


**Constructed-response Questions**

The purpose of this section is to describe the constructed-response questions that appear on the GACE Middle Grades English Language Arts assessment and to explain the criteria used to score each constructed-response question. The test includes two constructed-response questions: a literary analysis question and a writing assessment and pedagogy (teaching/writing) question. Unlike the selected-response questions, the constructed-response questions require you to demonstrate your knowledge in a subject area by providing in-depth written responses.

**Preparing for the Constructed-response Questions**

When preparing for the constructed-response questions, read the sample questions and scoring guide carefully. You may wish to draft a response to each sample question by reading the question and planning, writing, and revising your essay. You should use a total of about 15 minutes for each constructed-response question. Also, because no reference materials will be available during the test, it is recommended that you refrain from using a dictionary, a thesaurus, or textbooks while writing your practice responses.

Once you have written your practice responses, reread the scoring guide, and then read the sample responses provided for each score level. Rationales that explain how the responses characterize the score point description are provided for each of the responses. After you have read through these materials, review your own responses in light of the score point descriptions. You may also wish to review your responses and the score scale with staff in your preparation program.

*Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.*
## Scoring Guide

Readers will assign scores based on the following scoring guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</table>
| 3     | The response is successful in the following ways:  
• It demonstrates an ability to analyze the stimulus material thoughtfully and in depth.  
• It demonstrates a strong knowledge of the subject matter relevant to the question.  
• It responds appropriately to all parts of the question.  
• It demonstrates facility with conventions of standard written English. |
| 2     | The response demonstrates some understanding of the topic, but it is limited in one or more of the following ways:  
• It may indicate a misreading of the stimulus material or provide superficial analysis.  
• It may demonstrate only superficial knowledge of the subject matter relevant to the question.  
• It may respond to one or more parts of the question inadequately or not at all.  
• It may contain significant writing errors. |
| 1     | The response is seriously flawed in one or more of the following ways:  
• It may demonstrate weak understanding of the subject matter or of the writing task.  
• It may fail to respond adequately to most parts of the question.  
• It may be incoherent or severely underdeveloped.  
• It may contain severe and persistent writing errors. |
| 0     | The response is blank, off-topic, totally incorrect, or merely rephrases the question. |

**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
**Constructed-response Question 1: Literary Analysis**

The first constructed-response question is an analysis of a literary text.

**General Directions**

Plan to use approximately 15 minutes to complete this question.

Read the constructed-response question carefully before you begin to write your response to ensure that you address all components. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write.

The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of standard written English. Your written response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. You may, however, use citations when appropriate.

**Sample Literary Analysis Question**

“Why, thank you so much. I’d adore to.”

I don’t want to dance with him. I don’t want to dance with anybody. And even if I did, it wouldn’t be with him. He’d be well down among the last ten. I’ve seen the way he dances. . . . Just think, not a quarter of an hour ago, here I was sitting, feeling sorry for the poor girl he was dancing with. And now I’m going to be the poor girl.

“The Waltz,” a short story by humorist Dorothy Parker, opens with the lines above. Explain how Parker establishes tone and uses perspective in the excerpt.
Sample Responses and Rationales for Literary Analysis Question

Sample Response Earning a Score of 3

Dorothy Parker tells the story in the first person with two contrasting perspectives: what her character says and what she is really thinking. This sets an amusing and intimate tone throughout the excerpt.

Contributing to the sense of intimacy with her character is the conversational tone of her thoughts. Immediately the reader identifies with the character. Also, the use of present tense, so we are overhearing the character’s thoughts as she is having them, contributes to the intimacy of the internal dialogue. When she says that she didn’t want to dance with anyone, and even if she did “it wouldn’t be him,” it feels like the character is having a private conversation with the reader. Finally, the reader is left with a feeling of ironic amusement. The character who so politely agrees to dance has just been feeling sorry for her partner’s previous victim: “just think, not a quarter of an hour ago, here I was sitting, feeling sorry for the poor girl he was dancing with. And now I’m going to be the poor girl.” Again, the reader identifies with the intimate tone the character uses since at one time or another most of us have also agreed to do something we would have preferred not to, just to be polite.

Rationale for the Score of 3

This is a successful response because it addresses and analyzes the aspects of tone and perspective thoughtfully and in depth. Not only does the response identify the first-person perspective, but it also recognizes the duality of the perspective in “what her character says and what she is really thinking.” These “contrasting perspectives” reveal the outwardly proper and polite narrator, while the internal comments reflect the “ironic amusement” that she is now the “poor girl” who is the next “victim” of the awkward dance partner.

The words “amusing” and “intimate” accurately describe the tone of the piece, and the writer further analyzes how the tone establishes a connection (“the reader identifies”) between the character and the reader, which adds to the intimacy and ironic humor of the piece.
Sample Response Earning a Score of 2

The tone of the story is humorous. Dorothy Parker does not want to dance with the man. While she says yes, she is thinking just the opposite. It’s funny because in the first line of the story she says she would like to dance; “Why, thank you so much. I’d adore to.” But in her mind, she is thinking about how much she does not want to dance with him. He would be one of the last people she’d dance with; “down among the last ten.” She also makes fun of the “poor girl” that he danced with before her. She believes that when she dances with him, she will look as bad as the “poor girl,” she does not want to look that bad. The story is funny because Dorothy Parker gets put in a tricky social situation.

Rationale for the Score of 2

While recognizing that the excerpt is intended to be humorous, the response is limited and provides only a superficial analysis of the subject matter. The writer identifies the fundamental conflict in Parker’s excerpt; i.e., the speaker does not want to dance, but she cordially agrees when asked. However the response does not go on to provide an in-depth analysis of how Parker uses first-person perspective to establish a humorous, ironic tone in her short story. Furthermore, the response demonstrates a crucial misreading of the excerpt by positing that the speaker is also making fun of the “poor girl.” In truth, the speaker was in sympathy with the “poor girl” and finds it ironic that she will now be the “poor girl” dancing with the young man.

Sample Response Earning a Score of 1

In the above passage, Parker establishes tone with short, precise sentences, gradually getting longer. She used perspective in dealing with the fact that she does not want to dance and especially with him. She also was putting herself in the other girl’s position.

Rationale for the Score of 1

This response reveals a weak understanding of tone and perspective. It is severely underdeveloped, lacks analysis, and, moreover, includes a glaring misread of the piece. The explanation of how Parker establishes tone is limited to merely describing sentence style, and the writer’s analysis of perspective is wrong. The response restates the central premise that “she does not want to dance and especially with him.” This is followed by a misread of the ironic moment, as reflected in a reference to “the other girl’s position” that misses the point that Parker is now in the position of the girl she earlier pitied.

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Constructed-response Question 2: Teaching/Writing

The second constructed-response question asks you to read a student response to an assignment and then complete three tasks.

Directions

Introduction
Students in a seventh-grade class were asked to write a descriptive essay, for an audience of their peers, in response to an assignment about a favorite person. What follows is the final draft of one student’s response to this assignment. Read the student’s response carefully, paying particular attention to the features of writing listed below, and then complete the three tasks that follow the student’s response.

Features of Writing
• Focus/thesis
• Organization
• Content/supporting ideas
• Sentence variety and complexity
Sample Teaching/Writing Question

Student Response

There are a lot of people that are important to me. My family, friends, and many more, but I know that my Aunt Pat is high on the list.

My Aunt Pat is someone I truly care about. Aunt Pat is always there for me. She makes me happy when I am sad. She also cheers me up when I am sad. Another reason I care for her is because we have the same interests. Pat likes to sew, scrapbook, and march in parades.

Pat is a great role model. She always tries to do the right thing. She is also very enthusiastic. Pat has many traits. She is reliable, cool, funny and most of all she is creative. I love that she is a creative person. Currently she owns the costume shop in town. She also likes fall. She thinks it is pretty. Most people like winter because of Christmas, or summer because of the heat, but she has her own mind. She likes fall. I also love that she isn’t afraid to be different.

In the end there are many reasons why I love her. She makes you feel like you are the most important person in the world and nobody can take that away from you.

Tasks
1. Identify one feature of the student’s writing as a strength. Be sure to support your response with examples from the student’s writing. Do NOT discuss facility in the conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation) in this part of your response.
2. Identify one feature of the student’s writing as a weakness. Be sure to support your response with examples from the student’s writing. Do NOT discuss the errors in the conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation) in this part of your response.
3. Describe one follow-up assignment you would give to this student that would build on the strength that you described in Task 1 OR address the weakness that you identified in Task 2. Explain how the assignment would help the student.
Sample Responses and Rationales for Teaching/Writing Question

Sample Response Earning a Score of 3

One strength of this student’s descriptive essay is attention to the task of writing about a favorite person, which is established in a nicely stated (albeit structurally flawed) opening paragraph. “. . . my Aunt Pat is high on the list.” All subsequent discussion is about Aunt Pat— who cheers, who shares interests, who is a “great role model,” who is creative (“Currently she owns the costume shop in town.”), who likes fall when winter and Christmas or summer are the more typical seasonal preferences.

However, the weakness in this essay is that this defined focus is not well elaborated with illustrative examples. Aunt Pat is a great role model, but how? “She always tries to do the right thing” but in what way or ways? When the student offers support— “we have the same interests, Pat likes to sew, scrapbook, and march in parades” – the illustrative details are lacking. Sentences are simple, leaving the reader wishing for those supporting details.

The suggestion for revision, therefore, would be to build on the clear focus, which captures a genuine appreciation for this favorite person by extending the sentences to build interest. The student’s respect and love of “Aunt Pat” is charming. The hints at her character (marching in parades, owning the costume shop, “she isn’t afraid to be different”) are intriguing. But, for example the simple, repetitive statements, “She makes me happy when I am sad. She also cheers me up when I am sad” do not reveal HOW “she is always there for me.”

Illustrative examples literally “color in” the lines to make the portrait come alive.

The purpose of the essay is to “describe” a favorite person. The follow up assignment encourages the student to address this purpose. The essay is definitely about one favorite person, but the descriptive details are limited. Adding in one or two stories and a brief example for other points would enhance the fullness of why Aunt Pat is special.

To extend the example above: The student could consider, “When was one specific moment when Aunt Pat cheered you up?”
Rationale for the Score of 3

This is a successful response because it addresses all three tasks with strong evidence of understanding the features of writing and how to support a student in strengthening an essay.

The response to Task 1 correctly identifies one strength as the focus on a favorite person, as required by the student’s assignment. Examples are provided of how the essay centers on descriptions of Aunt Pat’s personality and interests. The response to Task 2, identifying a weakness of the essay, notes the limits of those descriptive details: (“. . . is not well elaborated with illustrative examples”). What follows is an analysis of specific points in the essay that make a statement without explanation or examples. Task 2 is thorough in this analysis.

The response to Task 3 then pointedly addresses what could be done to provide the needed elaboration. These suggestions for revision are very strong, including both what should be done and why these additions would improve the essay: (“Illustrative examples literally ‘color in’ the lines to make the portrait come alive”). One specific task — directly related to the weakness identified in Task 2 — is suggested that would hone an appreciation of descriptive details and enhance an awareness of the concept of “complex sentences.” The response shows a clear understanding of how actions by the teacher could support the student’s skills and appreciation of writing.
Sample Response Earning a Score of 2

The student who wrote the essay has great focus and gives lots of details. She describes her Aunt Pat and how much she likes her. Then she goes on to provide details: her Aunt Pat “cheers her up” and is a “great role model.” The student also describes things that Aunt Pat likes to do: “sew, scrapbook, and march in parades” and says that she “owns the costume shop in town.” I would say that a strength of this essay is how the student keeps the focus on Aunt Pat while also giving so many details about what her Aunt is like and what she does. The content and supporting details are what make this essay so enjoyable to read.

The weakness, however, is that the essay isn’t very organized. The statements about Aunt Pat do not follow a logical pattern. The student should have made an outline before writing; each paragraph should have contained a separate supporting detail about her aunt. For example, the student could have had a whole paragraph about the costume shop and what kinds of costumes her aunt sold. It would have been very interesting to know whether she only sold Halloween costumes or whether she sold costumes for other parties. Also the writer could have had a whole paragraph about what kinds of parades her aunt marches in and why she likes parades.

For a follow-up assignment, I would ask the student to describe another favorite person and to give plenty of details about why that person is special. It wouldn’t have to be a family member, this time it could be a friend. It would be interesting to read about some who is the students’ age and has the same interest as the student. Then the student could also talk about his or her own likes and dislikes. That would give readers a picture of the student; then we would know the student and her favorite people.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

The response above identifies both a strength and a weakness of the student essay; however, they are only superficially described. For example, the response does identify a lack of organization as a weakness of the essay, but the analysis is not very strong. Adding entire paragraphs about the costume shop or about parades would not address the focus of the piece — why Aunt Pat is important to the student. While the response does provide a follow-up assignment, that assignment does not address the strength or weakness described in the response. Furthermore, the response also fails to explain why the assignment would be useful in building on a strength or improving a weakness. In summary, the response received a score of 2 not only because it provides a superficial analysis of a strength and a weakness, but also because it does not fully address the questions posed in the three tasks.
Sample Response Earning a Score of 1

This student really loves her Aunt Pat! She sounds like a fun person. As a scrapbooker, I know how much creative energy is needed. Aunt Pat is creative. The student says, “most of all she is creative” and she backs this up with the details that the aunt owns a costume shop! And Aunt Pat loves fall, even when most people like winter “because of Christmas” and summer “because of the heat.” These are good details of how Aunt Pat “isn’t afraid of being different.”

The essay makes a good case why Aunt Pat is a favorite person.

However, it is not perfect! I would have this student fix the fragments, like in the first paragraph. For example, “Some of those important people are my family, friends and many more, but I know that my Aunt Pat is high on the list.” It is important to have the verb in that sentence to make it a sentence and not a fragment.

It is really important to write in complete sentences. This would be important to help the student become a better writer.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

Though one strength of the essay is noted (“The essay makes a good case why Aunt Pat is a favorite person”), the student’s response is given too much credit for “good details” that are actually underdeveloped.

The attempt to respond to Task 2 addresses a grammatical weakness — fragmented sentences (“It is important to have a verb in that sentence. . . .”) — even though the prompt specifies NOT to discuss errors in grammar or punctuation.

The response to Task 3 is weak because it addresses remediation of grammar (“write in complete sentences”) and because the example cited (“Some of those…high on the list”) is incorrectly listed as a sentence fragment. Compounding the weak response is its lack of recommended teacher-directed remedial activity or counseling. Enthusiasm for the student’s response does not by itself provide a basis for helping the student strengthen this essay.
## Study Plan Sheet

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<th>Content covered</th>
<th>Description of content</th>
<th>How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)</th>
<th>What resources do I have/need for studying this content?</th>
<th>Where can I find the resources I need?</th>
<th>Date planned to study this content</th>
<th>Date completed</th>
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**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Preparation Resources

The resources listed below may help you prepare for the GACE assessment in this field. These preparation resources have been identified by content experts in the field to provide up-to-date information that relates to the field in general. You may wish to use current issues or editions to obtain information on specific topics for study and review.

Journals

*Exceptional Children*, Council for Exceptional Children.

*Instructor*, Scholastic, Inc.

*Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, International Reading Association.

*Language Arts*, National Council of Teachers of English.

*Reading Research Quarterly*, International Reading Association.

*The Elementary School Journal*, University of Chicago Press.

*The Reading Teacher*, International Reading Association.

*Voices from the Middle*, National Council of Teachers of English.

Other Resources


Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.


**Online Resources**

Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) — www.eric.ed.gov

GovSpot, StartSpot Mediaworks, Inc. — www.govspot.com

International Reading Association — www.reading.org


National Council of Teachers of English — www.ncte.org

readwritethink — www.readwritethink.org

National Writing Project: Improving Writing and Learning in the Nation’s Schools — www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource

Navigating the ELPS, Using the New Standards to Improve Instruction for English Learners, Canter Press, John Seidlitz — http://portal.esc20.net/portal/page/portal/doclibraryroot/publicpages/ELPS/Tab/ELPS_082809(2).pdf

Paradigm Online Writing Assistant — www.powa.org

Georgia Department of Education — www.doe.k12.ga.us

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