



2002 Series GED® Test FAQs

We've put together this section to give you *quick* answers to some common GED® test-takers questions.

Many of the answers below include [short FAQ YouTube videos](#) to help answer the question. For specific information about GED® testing policies in your area, please visit [our new webpage for testing policies](#) in your area. **For step-by-step instructions and walkthroughs of the registration and scheduling process for the test on computer, please visit our [tutorial page](#).**

If you still have questions after you read through this section, please [contact GED Testing Service](#) for more information.

GED Testing Service is here to answer any questions regarding the research and data we use. If you have specific questions regarding data or research released by GED Testing Service, please direct all inquiries to Research@GEDtestingservice.com.

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What does "GED" stand for?

GED is a trademarked acronym used for the General Educational Development Tests, a battery of examinations administered by states and jurisdictions to measure the skills and knowledge similar to a high school course of study. GED® graduates earn a GED® credential. The type of credential issued, diploma or certificate, varies by state.

To learn how to use the trademarked term "GED" correctly, view our [Brand Usage Guidelines](#) online.

When and why did GED® testing begin?

At the request of the military, the GED® test was first developed in 1942 to help returning World War II veterans finish their high school studies and reenter civilian life. The GED® test first became available to civilians in 1947 when the state of New York implemented a program to award its high school diploma to those who passed.

What is the GED® test?

The GED® test is designed to measure the skills and knowledge equivalent to a high school course of study. The five content areas that comprise the GED® test are mathematics; language arts, reading; language arts, writing (including essay); science; and social studies.

Watch the video: [What is the GED® test?](#)

Are the GED® tests available online?

The GED® test must be taken in person at an Official GED Testing Center™.

[Locate a testing center](#) near you.

To read more information about the myths and warnings about testing online, go to our [Testing on Computer](#) page.

Watch the video: [Can I take the GED® test online?](#)

Who produces the GED® test?

The GED® test is developed, delivered, and safeguarded by content specialists, researchers, psychometricians, and other staff of the GED Testing Service, a joint venture between the American Council on Education and Pearson.

How does the GED® testing program work?

The GED® testing program is an international partnership involving the GED Testing Service, each U.S. state and the District of Columbia, the Canadian provinces and territories, the U.S. insular areas, the U.S. military and federal correctional institutions, and the veterans administration hospitals.

GED Testing Service establishes the test administration procedures and passing standard. All jurisdictions administer the GED Tests and award their high school credentials to adults who meet the GED® tests passing standards and any other additional jurisdictional requirements.

How many people take the GED® test?

In 2010, more than 757,000 adults worldwide took some portion of the GED® test. Of that total, more than 655,000 completed test and 474,000 (72%) earned a passing score.

To read more information about the effect of the GED® testing program on test-takers, you can review our [Research](#) or email research@GEDtestingservice.com.

What does it mean to pass the GED® test?

In order to pass the GED® test, an examinee must have a combined passing score of 2250; in addition, each individual subject area test score must be 410 or greater. Those passing the GED® test have demonstrated a level of knowledge equal to or greater than 40 percent of graduating high school seniors.

Watch the video: [What do I need to do to pass the GED® test?](#)

What should I tell someone who's interested in GED® testing?

Please direct GED® test-takers to our website at GEDtestingservice.com.

What are the benefits of earning a GED® credential?

Among the many benefits of the GED® testing program, passing the GED® test provides an opportunity for adults to continue their education. In fact, 95 percent of U.S. colleges and universities accept GED® graduates who meet their other qualifications for admission, according to the College Board.

A GED® credential documents that you have high school-level academic skills. About 96 percent of U.S. employers accept the GED® credential as equal to a traditional high school diploma, according to recent studies.

Watch the videos: [What are the benefits of earning a GED® credential?](#) or [Can I use my GED® credential to get into college?](#)

Who is eligible to take the GED® test?

You may take the GED® test if:

- You are not enrolled in high school
- You have not graduated from high school
- You are at least 16 years old
- You meet state, provincial, or territorial requirements regarding age, residency, and the length of time since leaving school

If you are considering leaving high school, the GED Testing Service recommends that you first meet with your high school counselor to talk seriously about your decision and the level of academic skill needed to pass the GED® test.

Free publications are available to help in providing information about the tests. Check with your [state, province, or territory's contact person](#) for GED® testing. Or search for a nearby testing center by entering your [ZIP code](#).

Watch the video: [Am I eligible to take the GED® test?](#)

What do I have to do to pass the GED® test?

You have to be able to read, compute, interpret information, and express yourself in writing on a level comparable to that of 60 percent of graduating high school seniors. If you are uncertain whether you have the level of skill needed to successfully complete the tests, you can find out more about your abilities in several ways. Many programs are sponsored by local school districts, colleges, and community organizations. Teachers and tutors in these programs can tell you whether you need intensive

preparation or a quick brush up.

Adult education and GED® preparation classes

(Check your local telephone listings)

Self study

1. Your local bookstore or library carries GED® and pre-GED® preparation texts
2. Your local public television station may carry "[GED Connection](#)"

Call 800-62-MYGED (800-626-9433) for:

1. A referral to a local GED® preparation program or testing site
2. An information brochure
3. A self-scoring version of the practice tests
4. Locating your [state, province, or territory's contact person](#) for GED® instruction

Watch the video: [What do I need to do to pass the GED® test?](#)

Call 877-EXAM-GED (877-392-6433) for information about testing on computer.

Should I study for the GED® test?

Preparation is an essential part of any important examination. You probably have gained some knowledge and skills through life experience, reading, and informal training, but remember that the GED® test is a rigorous battery of five tests that take more than seven and a half hours to complete. Regardless of your ability, you'll be more certain to perform your best on the tests if you know what to expect before the testing day arrives.

Watch the video: [How can I study for the GED® test?](#)

How much time does it take to complete the GED® test?

The battery of five GED® content-area tests takes seven hours and five minutes to complete. In some areas, you must take the entire battery of tests in one or two sittings. Other places permit you to take a single test each time you come to the testing center and may offer testing in the evenings. It may take up to several weeks for your scores to be reported back to you. Check with your [state, province, or territory's contact person](#) for GED® testing to find out about testing procedures in your area.

Where do I go to take the GED® test?

There are approximately 3,400 Official GED Testing Centers in the United States, Canada, and their territories. They are usually operated by local school boards, adult education centers, and/or community colleges.

- Check your local telephone listings under the headings listed above
- Call (800) 62-MY GED (800-626-9433) for pencil and paper testing questions; call 877-EXAM-GED (877-392-6433) for information about testing on computer.
- Check with your [state, province, or territory's contact person for GED® testing](#)
- Enter your ZIP code at [find the nearest Official GED Testing Center](#)

Contact the regional registration center nearest you for specific information about testing locations and procedures.

Watch the videos: [Where can I take the GED® test?](#) or [Can I take the GED® test at a Military Education Center?](#)

How much does it cost to take the GED® test?

The cost of taking the GED® test varies widely from no charge in some U.S. states to as much as \$80 in others. Check with your [state, province, or territory's contact person](#) for GED® testing or your local GED® testing center to find out about how to register for testing.

Watch the video: [How much does the GED® test cost?](#)

What do my scores mean?

Your official GED® transcript contains two sets of numbers: standard scores and percentile ranks. The standard scores make it possible to compare scores across tests and test forms. This is necessary because some tests contain a different number of questions and there are many forms of the GED® test in circulation, all of them equally difficult.

The percentile rank makes it possible to compare your performance on each one of the tests with the performance of graduating high school seniors. The higher the percentile rank, the better your performance.

Example: Kelly's total score after completing all five of the GED® test content areas is 2,850; her average standard score is 570. The percentile rank for that score is 77. The percentile rank of "77" means that Kelly has outperformed 77 out of 100 graduating high school seniors. Such a score places Kelly in the top 25 percent ($100-77=23$) of graduating U.S. high school seniors in terms of her general academic skills and knowledge.

For more information about what your scores mean, visit our [Understanding your scores](#) page.

Watch the video: [What does the percentile rank on my GED® transcript mean?](#)

How do you convert GED® test scores to a GPA?

Letter grades (A, B+, C-, etc.) are not standardized across every high school; an A student at one high school may be a C student at a more rigorous high school. Therefore, we cannot equate GED® test scores to a GPA. We can provide a national percentile rank that tells you where a GED® candidate stands in relation to graduating high school seniors.

Watch the video: [Can you make a GED® test score into a GPA?](#)

What if I don't pass all the content areas the first time?

You can take one or more of the tests again. However, note that many jurisdictions have special requirements for candidates who don't pass the GED® tests the first time. You may be required to wait several months or show proof of attending a preparation course before you're permitted to re-test. You may also have to pay an additional fee. For the specific regulations in your area, check with your [state, province, or territory's contact person](#) for GED® testing.

Watch the video: [What if I don't pass all five content areas the first time?](#)

What makes a GED® credential equivalent to high school?

The GED® test is developed using specifications established by experienced secondary school and adult educators and are reviewed by subject matter experts. Every test question is subjected to multiple reviews by test specialists and external content specialists, and is pretested before becoming part of a final test form. The GED® test is also standardized and normed using a national stratified random sample of graduating high school seniors. In order to pass the tests, the GED® candidate must demonstrate a level of skill that meets or surpasses that demonstrated by approximately 60 percent of graduating high school seniors.

Watch the video: [What can I do with a GED® credential?](#)

How many questions do I need to get right to earn the 410 passing score on each content area?

Each correct answer is worth one point. For each individual GED® test, these points are totaled and then converted to a standard score, which ranges from 200 to 800. Candidates need a standard score of 410 in order to pass each of the individual GED® test content area and an overall average score of 450. To receive a 410 standard score on a content area of the GED® test, candidates generally need to answer 60 to 65 percent of the questions correctly.

Will passing the GED® test get me into college?

About 95 percent of U.S. colleges and universities accept GED® graduates in the same manner as high school graduates. GED® graduates are also eligible for most federal financial aid if they meet the program's other criteria. After earning your GED® credential, sign up to take the [ACT](#) and/or the [SAT](#). The colleges to which you apply may also require you to take placement or achievement tests so that they can determine whether you need additional coursework.

Watch the video: [Can I use my GED credential to get into college?](#)

Are GED® graduates eligible for financial aid for college?

Federal monies are available to GED® recipients as they are to traditional high school graduates who meet the eligibility criteria. These requirements usually include demonstrated financial need. A student must be enrolled in an accredited program leading to degrees or certificates. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens and must have Social Security numbers. The [U.S. Department of Education' Office of Student Financial Assistance](#) publishes [two booklets](#) that you may find helpful.

Call the Federal Student Aid Information Center, 1-800-4FED AID (1-800-433-3243) Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., EST, or write to them at PO Box 84, Washington, DC 20044.

GED Testing Service publishes a free brochure for GED® graduates about finding financial aid and a companion booklet for adult educators. Visit our [publications](#) page to learn more.

How do I locate my scores?

If you took the GED® test on paper at a GED® testing center, you should contact your [local testing center](#) to get your scores. If you took the GED® on computer, you can login at [www.GEDcomputer.com](#) to view your scores.

If you took the GED® test during military services, Job Corps, or at a correctional institution, your scores may be housed at a location outside GED® testing centers. Please consult the information available on our [transcript request](#) page.

Watch the video: [How do I get a transcript of my GED® test scores?](#)

How do I submit a request for a test re-score?

To submit a request for a re-score of a previously taken exam [contact our call center](#).

What accommodations are available for people with disabilities who want to take the GED® test?

For candidates with a documented physical, sensory, emotional, or specific learning disability, [test accommodations are available](#). These accommodations may be requested by candidates who have disabilities that can be expected to negatively affect the candidate's chances of passing the GED® test.

Tests are available in U.S. English-language Braille, U.S. and Canadian English-language audiocassette, and in large print editions. In addition, with documented disability, the following accommodations to the standard testing environment may be made: extended time, supervised breaks, use of an audiocassette edition, calculator, scribe, and, in some instances, a private room for testing. Some accommodations are not permitted—for example, having the questions read aloud to the candidate. The GED Testing Service does not permit the use of a dictionary or a spell checker.

Each request for accommodation, or for testing session modifications, is considered on an individual basis. To begin the process of requesting an accommodation, a GED® candidate should go to the nearest [GED® testing center](#) and request Form L-15 (for specific learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and Form SA-001 (for emotional and physical disabilities).

These forms describe the information needed to document the disability. When the form is complete, it should be returned to the GED® testing center. The GED Testing Service is available during regular business hours to answer specific questions about policies and procedures.

Because extended testing hours and special materials are often needed, the first point of contact for the person with a disability or his/her advocate must be the nearest GED® testing center.

Watch the video: [What accommodations are available on the GED® test for people with disabilities?](#)

Language Arts, Writing Test Questions

How are the GED® Language Arts, Writing Test essays scored?

Since January 2002, GED® Language Arts, Writing Test (Part II) essays have been scored on a four-point holistic scale.

Two trained essay readers read each essay and score based on the overall impression. The *overall impression* of each paper is based on five areas:

1. Does the paper respond to the assigned prompt—did the candidate use the topic on the test?
2. Can the reader see or follow an organized plan for development?
3. Are there specific and relevant details to support the paper's focus?
4. Are the conventions of language (grammar, usage, and mechanics) generally followed?
5. Is the word choice precise, varied, and appropriate?

The two readers' scores are then averaged. If the essay receives a score of **2** or higher, the essay score is combined with the multiple-choice score to form a composite. If a candidate receives a score of **1** or **1.5** on the essay, there will be no composite score (a test score of 0 may be reported), and the candidate **must retake both the essay and multiple choice portion**.

NOTE: Please note that individual essay scores are not reported. On the composite score, the multiple choice score results represent 65 percent of the composite, and the essay score represents 35 percent.

Essay readers may not be more than one point apart in their scoring. In those cases where the readers are more than one point apart, the Chief Reader for the scoring site will set the score by agreeing with the reader whose score follows the GED Testing Service scale.

What is the passing score for the essay?

A GED® candidate must earn a score of **two** or higher on the Language Arts, Writing Test, Part II essay in order to receive a composite score and obtain a passing score. If a two or higher is not earned on the essay, a test score of 0 may be reported.

A candidate needs a score of **two** or higher to earn a passing score. States may set a composite passing score (multiple choice and essay) that is higher than the current minimum GED® passing score of 410. The composite passing score cannot be set lower than the GED Testing Service standard score.

When I receive my Language Arts, Writing Test score, how can I tell if I earned a score of 2 or higher on my essay?

If you received a score on your transcript in the range of 200-800, you would have earned at least a score of **two** (minimum passing score on the four-point scale) on your essay. If your score was 0, you did not earn a score of two or higher on the essay.

If you received a double (**) asterisk on your transcript, then you did not earn a **2** on your essay. **Note:** A single asterisk (*) indicates that you did not write on the assigned topic, and your response was recorded as "off topic."

If it was your essay score that kept you from passing, you will still have to retake both parts of the Language Arts, Writing Test. We highly recommend that you seek some additional preparation before retaking any of the GED® test content areas.

GED® candidates can find other preparation guides at their local libraries, bookstores, and at the GED Marketplace™ online.

How do GED® essay readers score papers? What do they consider the most important elements of good writing?

Good writing needs a focus, organization, and development with specific and relevant examples, details, explanations, etc. You'll see these elements at the top of our scoring grid. Our readers are especially concerned with the development that supports a focus. They do not, however, look for specific errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics—they don't score with the same elements in mind that a classroom teacher would.

Errors in grammar would affect a score only if they are so numerous and hinder the reader from understanding and following the writer's ideas. Consequently, writers need to minimize errors, so these mistakes don't distract the readers from the ideas in the paper.

What will the essay topic ask me to do? Can I find out what past topics have been on the writing test? Do I need any prior preparation for the essay?

Candidates will be asked to write on a topic of general interest. The topics are brief and generally ask candidates to state their views and support with examples from their own observation, knowledge, or experience.

GED® test-takers can find preparation guides at their local libraries, bookstores, and GED Marketplace™ online.

When I took the Official GED Practice Test™, I found that the essay question was not really a question. Why?

Although called the *essay question*, this is really a **prompt**—designed to do just that, prompt you to write about a topic. All of our topics are general enough that you will only need your own knowledge, experience, or observations to respond. The topics are expository in nature.

Does the GED Testing Service offer programs to help prepare GED® candidates to write essays for the Language Arts, Writing Test? Where can I get help with writing essays?

We develop the tests for use in U.S. states and Canadian provinces. GED Testing Service does not offer test preparation. We strongly urge you, especially if you have been away from academic writing for some time, to enroll in a review course and take the Official GED Practice Test™ so that you can get feedback on your writing. There are several study guides available in local bookstores and libraries.

You may also want to check this GED website (also accessible via www.gedtestingservice.com); go to the page for "Prospective Test Takers," then click on "Preparation," then click on "Materials."

The older form of the GED® Writing Skills Test provided a recommended word count for the essay. How long does my essay have to be now?

Your essay score is not based on a word count. So you will not necessarily fail if you have fewer than 200 words. For the 2002 Series GED® Test, the suggested word count was omitted. The word count was intended as a guide, not a requirement. However, we found examinees focusing more on the count than the presentation and development of ideas.

The only requirement for the essay's length is that it **must be written** on the two sides of the answer sheet. Essay readers **will not read additional pages**.

Writing textbooks will not always agree on the same point. For example, one book will tell writers to use a comma after each item in a series (e.g. coffee, eggs, juice, and toast), but another book might tell writers to omit the last comma before the conjunction (e.g. coffee, eggs, juice and toast.). Which is correct? Will essay readers give me a lower score?

Both of the comma-use instances that you cite are correct. Most English teachers will agree that the comma before the "and" is optional; however, the writer must be consistent. If the writer omits the comma before "and," he must omit it every time there are three or more items in a series. Likewise, if the comma is used, the writer must use it in all cases. *Consistency is the key.*

When our trained readers are reading the essays for a score, they are looking for an overall impression, not individual errors. Grammar, usage, and mechanics errors will affect a reader's score if there are a sufficient number of errors that collectively make it difficult for the reader to understand or follow the writer's ideas. Therefore, the two applications of the comma for the last item in a series would not affect the reader's score.

As a side note, multiple choice items on Language Arts, Writing, Part I will not test the comma use between the next to last item and the last item. However, the comma between items one and two (in a series of three or more items) will be tested.

The GED Testing Service essay scoring guide refers to the conventions of EAE. What is EAE?

Edited American English (EAE) is fundamentally the same as Standard Written English (SWE), i.e. those conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics that writers and speakers adhere to in order to communicate effectively. In planning ahead for the 2002 Series GED® Tests in 1997, the Writing Test Specifications Committee aligned itself with the National Council of Teachers of English, who use EAE as the norm for the variety of English that is most used by educated speakers of the language.

For writers, the significance is that they must still employ a style, grammar, and usage that allows a mutual level of comprehension and understanding among educated speakers and writers. For example, EAE still governs when to use *who* or *whom*, *is* or *are*, pronoun forms, verb form and verb tense, adjective or adverb forms, parallel constructions, and sentence structure. Basically, only the name has changed.

One reason for the change is perception. (Any writing that is *not standard* is, therefore, perceived by many as *substandard*.) The Writing Test Specifications Committee wanted to remove any impediment that may have negative impact on a candidate's performance. The changeover to the term EAE offsets any negative impact that a candidate may feel if his or her writing is interpreted as *substandard*.

Please direct questions about this page to:

help@GEDtestingservice.com

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