Introduction & review of the 2014 Reasoning Through Language Arts Test

Essential background Information for Teachers
- When viewing this presentation click on view and then on ‘notes page’ to read the attached comments.
- Open separate document containing questions for reflection and complete.
- **Thanks!**
Purpose of the new GED® test

1. To provide results leading to the award of a *high school equivalency credential*

2. To provide *evidence of readiness* to enter workforce training programs or postsecondary education

3. To provide actionable information about a candidate’s academic *strengths and weaknesses*
Here’s what’s new....

No more SUBJECTIVE writing. All writing is a response to already given texts.

**GED® test**

**Constructed Response**

**Extended Response**

**Short Answer**

**Multiple choice**

Technology-Enhanced Items

Fill-in-the-blank items

Hot-spot items

Drag-and-drop items

Drop-down selection items
- Basic keyboarding
- Cut
- Copy
- Paste
- Undo/Redo
- Insert
- Enter – hard return
- Spacing
- Backspace
- Highlight
"WRITING TODAY IS NOT A FRILL FOR THE FEW, BUT AN ESSENTIAL SKILL FOR THE MANY."

THE NEGLECTED "R": THE NEED FOR A WRITING REVOLUTION
THESE ARE THE SHIFTS
Shift 1 – Complexity: Regular practice with complex text and its academic language

• Complexity of text that students can read is the greatest predictor of success
• There is a four grade level gap between secondary and college/career level text
• Shift from how students read to complexity of texts that are read
• Focus needed on addressing academic vocabulary of students
Shift 2 – Evidence: Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational

- Priority placed on textual evidence based on national assessment data
- Focus is on students’ ability to cite evidence from text in order to present
  - Careful analyses
  - Well-defended claims
  - Clear information
Knowledge

Shift 3 – Knowledge: Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction

- Focus not limited to English language arts, but also literacy across the disciplines of
  - Science
  - Social studies
  - Technical subjects
- Focus shifts to nonfiction text that constitutes the majority of what people read in college and the workplace
2014 GED® test

Integrated reading and writing assessment

75% - nonfiction
25% - fiction

Constructed responses
Reasoning through Language Arts
Social Studies
Science

Enhanced technology items

Overview of Content

The 2014 GED® test includes writing in three of the four modules: Reasoning through Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science.
What’s new in the Language content domain?

- Complete item types that simulate real-life editing tasks
- Edit to eliminate non-standard or informal usage
- Develop an argument and support ideas with text-based evidence
- Strategically apply awareness of audience and purpose of the task
What’s new in the Writing domain?

**Constructed Responses**

- Provide real-world opportunity for test-takers to develop an argument and support ideas with text-based evidence
- Integrate reading and writing skills
- Scored using a multi-dimensional rubric
- Can be an extended response or a short answer
2002 GED® Essay Prompt

What is one important goal you would like to achieve in the next few years?

In your essay, identify that one goal and explain how you plan to achieve it. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.
Seeds of Change: How Humans Can Benefit from Influencing the Weather

Dr. Kathleen Silverton, meteorologist, speaking at a town hall meeting in Edwardsville, Iowa, July 17, 2010

1. It might seem more like science fiction than science, but a process called cloud seeding really can increase rainfall. Since 1946, scientists have been researching technology to change precipitation.

2. We are faced with water shortages, droughts, and increasing human populations. In response, many communities in the United States rely upon cloud seeding to increase rain and snowfall. Cloud seeding involves spreading silver iodide into existing clouds. The silver causes moisture to condense more effectively, making bigger clouds and more rain.

3. Studies conducted by the Weather Modification Association and the American Meteorological Institute have shown increases in precipitation ranging from five to 100 percent! Coastal ranges have seen the highest increases.
In your response, develop an argument about how Senator Kennedy’s position in his speech reflects the enduring issue expressed in the quotation from the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780. Incorporate relevant and specific evidence from the quotation, the speech, and your own knowledge of the enduring issue and the circumstances surrounding Kennedy’s run for the presidency to support your analysis.

Type your response in the box. This task may require 25 minutes to complete.
A farmer purchased 30 acres of farmland. The farmer calculated that the average topsoil thickness on the farmland is about 20 centimeters.

The farmer wants to maintain the thickness of the soil on this farmland by reducing erosion. The farmer plans to test the effectiveness of two different farming methods for reducing soil erosion.

**Method 1**: No-till (planting crops without plowing the soil)

**Method 2**: Winter cover crop (growing plants during the winter that are plowed into the soil in spring)

The farmer hypothesizes that using either method will reduce erosion compared to using traditional farming methods (plowing and no cover crop).

Design a controlled experiment that the farmer can use to test this hypothesis. Include descriptions of data collection and how the farmer will determine whether his hypothesis is correct.

Type your response in the box. This task may require approximately 10 minutes to complete.
**Constructed-response questions** are assessment items that ask students to apply knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities to real-world, standards-driven performance tasks. Constructed-response items require students to **read** a prompt or a specified text article, **reflect** on the key points, and then **develop** a meaningful essay or analysis of the information. All constructed-response questions measure students' ability to apply, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize the knowledge that they have acquired in a more abstract way.

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**The Constructed Response**
CCR Writing Standards

CCR Anchor 1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

• Introduce a claim
• Supply evidence of each claim
• Use words, phrases, and clauses to link sections Create cohesion
• Establish and maintain formal style and objective tone
• Attend to the conventions
• Provide a concluding statement that supports argument presented
# Holistic Scoring - then

## GED 2002 Essay Scoring Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Effective</th>
<th>3 Adequate</th>
<th>2 Marginal</th>
<th>1 Inadequate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response to the Prompt</strong></td>
<td>Reader understands and easily follows the writer’s expression of ideas.</td>
<td>Reader understands writer’s ideas.</td>
<td>Reader occasionally has difficulty understanding or following the writer’s ideas.</td>
<td>Reader has difficulty identifying or following the writer’s ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Presents a clearly focused main idea that addresses the prompt.</td>
<td>Uses the writing prompt to establish a main idea.</td>
<td>Addresses the prompt, though the focus may shift.</td>
<td>Attempts to address prompt but with little or no success in establishing a focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development and Details</strong></td>
<td>Establishes a clear and logical organization.</td>
<td>Uses an identifiable organizational plan.</td>
<td>Shows some evidence of an organizational plan.</td>
<td>Fails to organize ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions of EAE</strong></td>
<td>Achieves coherent development with specific and relevant details and examples.</td>
<td>Has focused but occasionally uneven development; incorporates some specific detail.</td>
<td>Has some development but lacks specific details; may be limited to a listing, repetitions or generalizations.</td>
<td>Demonstrates little or no development; usually lacks details or examples or presents irrelevant information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Choice</strong></td>
<td>Consistently controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English (EAE).</td>
<td>Generally controls sentence structure and the conventions of EAE.</td>
<td>Demonstrates inconsistent control of sentence structure and the conventions of EAE.</td>
<td>Exhibits minimal or no control of sentence structure and the conventions of EAE.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GED 2002 Essay Scoring Rubric Provided By The GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education
Trait 1 Rubric Overview

- **Argument**
  - Creation of argument
  - Evidence – use of text citations to support created argument of source text(s)

- **Validity**
  - Assessment of the argument in source text(s)
  - Analysis of the issue

- **Integration**
  - Integration of claims, explanations and textual evidence
  - Connection of purpose to prompt
Trait 2 Rubric Overview

- **Ideas**
  - Development (reasoning)
  - Elaboration of ideas

- **Progression**
  - Progression (flow) of ideas
  - Connection of details to main ideas

- **Organization**
  - Structured to convey message
  - Transitional devices

- **Words**
  - Appropriate word choice
  - Advanced vocabulary application

- **Awareness**
  - Demonstrated to audience and purpose
  - Form of writing – objective rhetoric and persuasive
Trait 3 Rubric Overview

• **Conventions** – Application of standard English (e.g., homonyms/contractions, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage, placement of modifiers, capitalization, punctuation)

• **Sentence Structure**
  ◦ Variety
  ◦ Clarity
  ◦ Fluency (e.g., correct subordination, avoidance of wordiness, run-on sentences, awkwardness, usage of transition words, appropriate usage for formal structure)

• **Errors**
  ◦ Mechanics and conventions
  ◦ Comprehension based on errors
Scoring based on 2014 GED®

Traits of Writing

![Traits of Writing Table]

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Non-scorable Responses (Score of 0: Condition Code)

Response shows no evidence that test-taker has read the prompt or topic.
Response is incoherent.
Response is not in English.
Response has not been attempted (blank).
On the Road to the 2014 Test

New FORMAT
New EXPECTATIONS
New TASKS
New RUBRIC

New ATTITUDE!!
“WE CAN DO THIS!!”