

## Chapter 1

# Taking a Quick Glance at the GED

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Reviewing the different GED test sections and their questions
- ▶ Registering for the exam
- ▶ Knowing that you can take the GED when English is your second language
- ▶ Understanding what your scores mean and how they're determined

**T**he GED tests measure whether you understand what high school seniors across the country are supposed to have learned before they graduate. When you pass these tests, you earn a high school equivalency diploma, which can open many doors for you — perhaps doors that you don't even know exist at this point.

Ready to get started? This chapter gives you the basics of the GED tests: what the tests look like, how to answer the questions on them, how to schedule the tests, and what to do after you get your scores back.

## *Reviewing the Test Sections*

The GED tests include the following five tests, each of which you can take separately:

- ✓ Language Arts, Writing, Parts I and II
- ✓ Social Studies
- ✓ Science
- ✓ Language Arts, Reading
- ✓ Mathematics, Parts I and II



Note that although you can take each of the five tests separately, you must take both parts of the Language Arts, Writing or Mathematics Tests at the same time.

The following sections offer a closer look into what these tests cover and how they're set up.

## *Language Arts, Writing Test*

The Language Arts, Writing Test is split into two parts (which we explain in further detail in the following sections):

- ✓ Part I asks you to rewrite and revise passages. This part focuses on your grammar, punctuation, and spelling skills.
- ✓ Part II asks you to write an essay on a given topic. This part examines your skills in organizing your thoughts and writing clearly.



You must pass both parts to get a score in this test. If you pass one part of the test but not the other, you must retake both parts the next time.

### ***Language Arts, Writing Test, Part I***

The Language Arts, Writing Test, Part I, has 50 multiple-choice questions and a time limit of 75 minutes. In this test, you're asked to edit and revise material that's given to you. This material comes from the following sources:

- ✓ **Workplace materials:** Work-related letters, memos, and instructions that you may see on the job
- ✓ **How-to books:** Samples of all general reference books that are supposed to make you richer, stronger, and lighter or a better cook, driver, investor, or student (or anything else you want to become better at)
- ✓ **Informational works:** Documents that present you with information (often dry and boring information), such as the instructional manual that tells you how to set the clock on your DVD player

You find three question types in this part of the Language Arts, Writing Test:

- ✓ **Correction:** In these questions, you're asked to correct sentences presented to you.
- ✓ **Revision:** In these questions, you're presented with a sentence that has a word or phrase underlined. If the sentence needs a correction, one of the answer choices will be better than the words or phrase underlined. If no correction is needed, either one of the answer choices will be the same as the underlined portion, or one of the choices will be something like "no correction needed."
- ✓ **Construction shift:** In these questions, you have to correct a sentence by altering the sentence structure. The original sentence may not be completely wrong, but it can be improved with a little editing.



See Chapter 4 for the lowdown on this test, Chapters 5 and 7 for full-length practice Language Arts, Writing Tests, and Chapters 6 and 8 for answers and explanations to those tests.

To give you an idea of what the questions on this test look like, consider the following examples:

Questions 1 and 2 are based on the following business letter.

Dear Mr. Snyder:

(1) I have received your letter of February 3 and offer my apologi for the mistake in your account. (2) The charge for your checks should have been \$16.20, not \$1,620.00. (3) I have credited the entire amount, making your checks free. (4) I hope this settles the matter.

1. Sentence 1: **I have received your letter of February 3 and offer my apologi for the mistake in your account.**

How can this sentence be improved?

- (1) insert a semicolon after February 3
- (2) change February to Feb.
- (3) insert a period after February 3 and capitalize and
- (4) change apologi to apology
- (5) no correction needed

The correct answer is Choice (4). The correct spelling is *apology*.

2. Sentence 3: **I have credited the entire amount, making your checks free.**

How can this sentence be improved?

- (1) change credited to credit
- (2) change the comma after amount to a semicolon
- (3) change free to freely
- (4) change the comma after amount to a colon
- (5) no correction needed

The correct answer is Choice (5). The sentence is correct in its current form.

### ***Language Arts, Writing Test, Part II***

In this part of the Language Arts, Writing Test, you write an essay in 45 minutes. Because the two parts of the Writing Test are given together, however, you can share time between the two parts. If you finish Part I in less than 75 minutes, you can use the extra time on Part II.

The topic you're given to write on may sound like a question you hear in a Miss America pageant. Here are two examples:

- ✓ What is the most important invention discovered in your lifetime?
- ✓ How have computers allowed you to accomplish everyday tasks more efficiently?



See Chapter 4 for more examples of essay topics, and take a stab at writing full-length essays in the practice tests in Chapters 5 and 7. Time the tests so that you're taking them under the same conditions as the real GED tests.

In your essay, you give your opinion or explain your viewpoint and then back it up with your own experiences and facts you may know from your life. This essay isn't a research paper. The information for the essay topics on this test is in your head — not in a research library.

When you write this essay, make sure it's a series of interconnected paragraphs on a single topic. Not only should the entire essay begin with an introduction and end with a conclusion, but each paragraph needs an introductory sentence and a concluding sentence, as well.



Write only on the assigned topic. To make sure you understand what the topic is about, read it several times. Essays written off topic don't receive scores (and if you don't receive a score on Part II of the Writing Test, you have to take both Parts I and II over again).

Two different people grade your essay, and, as they do, they look for the following:

- ✓ Material that's clearly organized
- ✓ Main points that are well focused
- ✓ Ideas that are well developed
- ✓ Words that are used properly
- ✓ Sentences that are well structured
- ✓ Sentences that use proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling

**Note:** Neat writing or printing makes grading easier for your real-life graders, so taking some time to practice writing neatly before the test isn't a bad idea.



Read the newspapers and watch television news for a few months before the tests. Doing so gives you some material with which to back up your opinions and viewpoints in your essay.

## Social Studies Test

For the Social Studies Test, you have to answer 50 multiple-choice questions in 70 minutes. These questions deal with the following subject areas:

- ✓ American history (25 percent)
- ✓ World history (15 percent)
- ✓ Civics and government (25 percent)
- ✓ Economics (20 percent)
- ✓ Geography (15 percent)

The questions in this test are based on written texts, pictures, charts, tables, graphs, photographs, political cartoons, diagrams, or maps. These textual and pictorial excerpts come from a variety of sources, such as government documents, academic texts, material from work-related documents, and atlases.



See Chapter 9 for more information about the Social Studies Test, and be sure to take the full-length practice tests in Chapters 10 and 12. (Then check out Chapters 11 and 13 for the answers and explanations.)

You may see the following types of problems on the Social Studies Test.

Question 1 is based on the following table.

<i>Type of Religion</i>	<i>Date Started (Approximate)</i>	<i>Sacred Texts</i>
Buddhism	500 BC	None
Christianity	33 AD	Bible (Old Testament and New Testament)
Hinduism	4000 BC	Vedas; Upanishads
Islam	600 AD	Qur'an; Hadith
Judaism	2000 BC	Hebrew Bible; Talmud

1. According to the table, Hinduism

- (1) started in 600 AD
- (2) uses the Qur'an as one of its sacred texts
- (3) is the oldest religion
- (4) has no known sacred texts
- (5) has one known sacred text

The correct answer is Choice (3). The table shows that Hinduism is the oldest of the five religions listed because it began in 4000 BC.

Question 2 is based on the following excerpt from the diary of Christopher Columbus.

Monday, 6 August. The rudder of the caravel Pinta became loose, being broken or unshipped. It was believed that this happened by the contrivance of Gomez Rascon and Christopher Quintero, who were on board the caravel, because they disliked the voyage. The Admiral says he had found them in an unfavorable disposition before setting out. He was in much anxiety at not being able to afford any assistance in this case, but says that it somewhat quieted his apprehensions to know that Martin Alonzo Pinzon, Captain of the Pinta, was a man of courage and capacity. Made progress, day and night, of twenty-nine leagues.

2. Why would Rascon and Quintero have loosened the rudder?

- (1) They were trying to repair the rudder.
- (2) The Admiral found them in an unfavorable disposition.
- (3) The captain was very competent.
- (4) They wanted to stop to fish.
- (5) They did not want to be on the voyage.

The correct answer is Choice (5). This answer is the only one supported by the text. The others may be related to statements in the passage, but they don't answer the question.

## Science Test

When you take the Science Test, you have to answer 50 multiple-choice science questions in 80 minutes. The questions deal with the following topics:

- ✓ Life science (45 percent)
- ✓ Physical science, including chemistry and physics (35 percent)
- ✓ Earth and space science (20 percent)



TIP

Some of the information the questions refer to appears in passages that you read before answering the questions. Other information is presented in charts, figures, graphs, maps, or tables. Chapter 14 discusses these different formats in detail. Turn to Chapters 15 and 17 to take two full-length sample Science Tests that are similar to the real ones. (Don't forget to go to Chapters 16 and 18 to find the answers and explanations to those tests — after you finish taking them, of course!)



HEADS UP

Most of the information you need to answer the questions on the Science Test is given to you in the passages and other excerpts, although to get a perfect score, you're expected to have picked up a basic knowledge of science. However, even if you answer correctly only the questions based entirely on information presented, you should get a score high enough to pass.

Here are some sample problems that may be on the Science Test.

Questions 1 and 2 are based on the following excerpt from a press release.

A key feature of the Delta 4's operation is the use of a common booster core, or CBC, a rocket stage that measures some 150 feet long and 16 feet wide. By combining one or more CBCs with various upper stages or strap-on solid rocket boosters, the Delta 4 can handle an extreme range of satellite applications for military, civilian, and commercial customers.

1. The CBC in this context is a

- (1) Canadian broadcasting corporation
- (2) common booster core
- (3) cooperative boosters corps
- (4) civilian barbers cooperative
- (5) common ballistic cavalier

The correct answer is Choice (2). After all, it's the only answer choice mentioned in the passage.

2. How can the Delta 4 handle a wide range of applications?

- (1) using the Delta 4 with different names
- (2) developing a Delta 5
- (3) continuing research
- (4) using the CBC as the base of a rocket ship
- (5) creating a common core booster

The correct answer is Choice (4). The passage says that “By combining one or more CBCs with various upper stages or strap-on solid rocket boosters . . .,” so Choice (4) comes closest to answering the question.

## Language Arts, Reading Test

The Language Arts, Reading Test includes 40 multiple-choice questions that you must answer in 65 minutes. Seventy-five percent of the questions are based on passages from literature and include at least one work from each of the following:

- ✓ Drama
- ✓ Poetry
- ✓ Prose fiction (that is, novels and short stories) written before 1920
- ✓ Prose fiction written between 1920 and 1960
- ✓ Prose fiction written after 1960

Twenty-five percent of the questions are based on nonfiction texts. These passages come from any of the following sources:

- ✓ **Critical reviews of visual and performing arts:** Most people go to the theater, movies, and concerts for entertainment, but if, after you leave, you tell other people your impression of what you saw, you’re doing more than just watching for entertainment’s sake — you’re critically reviewing the performance. In this test, some of the questions may be based on excerpts from critical reviews.
- ✓ **Nonfiction prose:** *Prose* is any written words not written as poetry. Prose is divided into two main categories: fiction and nonfiction. If the story is made up by the author, it’s usually referred to as *prose fiction*. If the words are based on facts, the work is considered *nonfiction prose*. A biography, an instruction manual, or a history text (even this book!) are all examples of nonfiction prose.
- ✓ **Workplace and community documents:** These documents are the types of materials you see on the job or in a community; they include workplace rules, employment contracts, wills, deeds, mortgage documents, instructions on how to use a voting machine, and income tax forms.



Chapter 19 gives you more information about the Language Arts, Reading Test, and Chapters 20 and 22 test your knowledge with full-length sample tests. (Don’t forget to turn to Chapters 21 and 23 for the answers and explanations to those tests when you finish taking them.)

You may see questions like the following in the Language Arts, Reading Test.

Questions 1 and 2 are based on the following excerpt from a play.

*Irvin and Mervin enter from stage left. Irvin is dressed sloppily in torn jeans, he wears a flannel shirt over a dirty T-shirt, and he has unkempt hair. Mervin is dressed more neatly in khakis, a blue buttondown shirt open at the neck, and loafers.*

**Irvin:** What you want to do, man?

**Mervin:** (*laughing*) With you or to you?

**Irvin:** (*looking up*) What do you mean by that?

**Mervin:** What are you wearing?

**Irvin:** What's wrong with it?

**Mervin:** What's not wrong with it?

**Irvin:** So what? You don't want to go to the mall now?

**Mervin:** Why would I want to go to the mall with you, looking like that?

**Irvin:** Aren't I your best friend?

**Mervin:** Can't you dress a little better?

**Irvin:** Would I be a better friend if I dressed more like you?

*Irvin and Mervin look at each other and shuffle off toward the mall.*

1. What form of sentence does the author use to create this conversation?

- (1) All of the dialogue is boring.
- (2) All of the dialogue is in questions.
- (3) Every sentence is in a different form.
- (4) This is the way I talk to my friends.
- (5) All of the dialogue is in exclamatory sentences.

The correct answer is Choice (2). Each line of dialogue is a question.

2. According to the dialogue, why do Irvin and Mervin want to go to the mall?

- (1) The latest *Harry Potter* movie is playing there.
- (2) They are going to meet friends.
- (3) Irvin wants to shop for clothes.
- (4) Mervin works there.
- (5) They are looking for something to do.

The correct answer is Choice (5). According to the first line of dialogue, they're looking for something to do. In another scene, you may find out that they're going to see a movie, meeting friends, shopping for clothes, or going to work, but GED questions are based only on the dialogue presented.

## ***Mathematics Test, Parts I and II***

The Mathematics Test has two parts: Part I allows you to use a calculator; Part II doesn't. Each part has 25 questions. You have 45 minutes to complete each part. In other words, you have to answer 50 questions in 90 minutes. Answer all the questions.

The Mathematics Test covers the following four major areas:

- ✓ Algebra, equations, and patterns (20 to 30 percent)
- ✓ Data analysis, statistics, and probability (20 to 30 percent)
- ✓ Measurement and geometry (20 to 30 percent)
- ✓ Number operations (20 to 30 percent)

Eighty percent of the questions are multiple choice; the other 20 percent require you to answer the question yourself in what is called an *alternate-format grid*.



An alternate-format grid is either a standard grid or a coordinate-plane grid. Instead of getting a set of multiple-choice answers to choose from, you figure an answer and enter it on whichever of these two grids you're given on the answer sheet. (Note that the coordinate-plane grid may require some practice — if you need help and reading through Chapter 24 isn't enough, contact a tutor to walk you through it.)



Chapter 24 gives you a lot more information about the Mathematics Test, including how to answer the different types of questions and how to prepare for the subject areas tested. Check out Chapters 25 and 27 for two full-length practice Mathematics Tests, and don't forget to turn to Chapters 26 and 28 for the answers and explanations.

Consider the following questions (one traditional multiple-choice question and two questions that you have to answer using alternate-format grids) that are similar to what you may see on the Mathematics Test.

1. A right-angle triangle has a hypotenuse of 5 feet and one side that's 36 inches long. What is the length of the other side in feet?
  - (1) 3
  - (2) 48
  - (3) 243
  - (4) 6
  - (5) 4

The correct answer is Choice (5). Using the Pythagorean Relationship (a formula that's given to you on the Formula page of the test), you know that  $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ , where  $c$  is the hypotenuse and  $a$  and  $b$  are either of the other two sides. Because you know the hypotenuse and one side, turn the equation around so that it reads  $a^2 = c^2 - b^2$ .

To get  $c^2$ , you square the hypotenuse:  $5 \times 5 = 25$ .

The other side is given in inches — to convert inches to feet, divide by 12:  $36 \div 12 = 3$ . To get  $b^2$ , square this side:  $3 \times 3 = 9$ .

Now solve the equation for  $a$ :  $a^2 = 25 - 9$  or  $a^2 = 16$ . Take the square root of both sides, and you get:  $a = 4$



The Mathematics Test presents real-life situations in the questions. So if you find yourself answering 37 feet to a question about the height of a room or \$3.00 for an annual salary, recheck your answer because you're probably wrong.



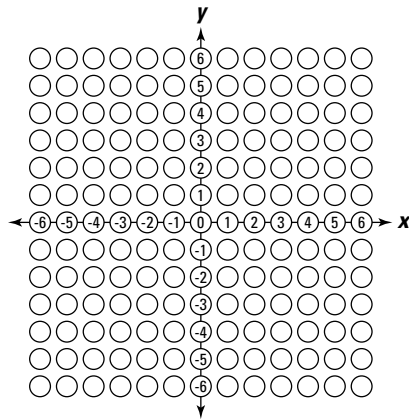
2. Barb is counting the number of boxes in a warehouse. In the first storage area, she finds 24 boxes. The second area contains 30 boxes. The third area contains 28 boxes. If the warehouse has 6 storage areas where it stores boxes, and the areas have an average of 28 boxes, what is the total number of boxes in the last three areas? Record your answer on the standard grid by writing the number in the top boxes and shading in the bubbles below the boxes. You have to write the answer in both places.

	/	/	/	
.	.	.	.	.
0	0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9

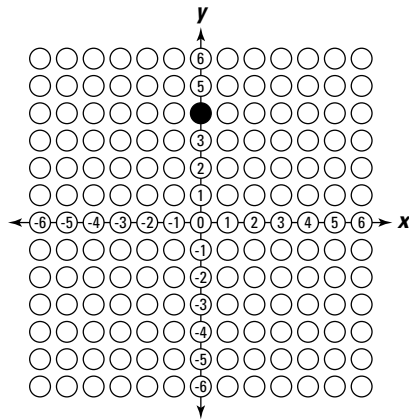
The correct answer is 86 (which you record on the standard grid provided). If the warehouse has 6 storage areas and they have an average of 28 boxes in each, they have  $6 \times 28 = 168$  boxes in the warehouse. The first three areas have  $24 + 30 + 28 = 82$  boxes in them. The last three areas must have  $168 - 82 = 86$  boxes in them.

8	6			
	/	/	/	
.	.	.	.	.
0	0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5
6	●	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7
●	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9

3. A rectangle has one corner on the origin. The base goes from the origin to the point (3,0). The right side goes from (3,0) to (3,4). Draw the missing point on the coordinate-plane grid.



The correct answer is to shade the missing point at (0,4). If you shade the three points given on the coordinate-plane grid, you see that a fourth point at (0,4) creates the rectangle. Just be sure, however, that you don't draw on the GED test book as you're taking the test! Instead, draw the point as shown on the following coordinate-plane grid:



## *It's a Date: Scheduling the Test*

To take the GED, you can't just drop in to the testing site and take the test whenever you please. You have to schedule it based on the available testing dates. Each state or local testing center sets its own schedule for the five GED tests, which means that your state decides how and when you take the five tests. Schedules for the tests vary by state or local testing center and may be offered as often as once every week or as seldom as once every couple of months. Your local GED administrator can give you all the information you need about scheduling the test. Locate the GED administrator in your area by logging on to [www.gedtest.org](http://www.gedtest.org) or by calling 800-62-MYGED. In addition, local school districts and community colleges can provide information about local test centers in your area.

Taking all five of the GED tests together takes seven hours and five minutes, with breaks in between the tests. Depending on your local testing center, you may have to take all the tests in one sitting (a rare stipulation), or you may be able to break the tests up into two or more sittings. Some states allow you to take one test each time you go to the testing center, and some offer the tests in the evenings or on weekends.

The following sections answer some questions you may have before you schedule your test date.

## *Discovering whether you're eligible*

Before you schedule your test, make sure you meet the requirements to take the GED. You're eligible to apply to take the GED tests only if

- ✔ **You're not currently enrolled in a high school.** If you're currently enrolled in a high school, you're expected to complete your diploma there. The purpose of the GED tests is to give people who aren't in high school a chance to get an equivalent high school diploma.
- ✔ **You're not a high school graduate.** If you're a high school graduate, you should have a diploma, which means you don't need to take the GED.
- ✔ **You meet state requirements regarding age, residency, and the length of time since leaving high school.** Check with your local GED administrator to determine your state's requirements concerning these criteria.

## *Knowing when you can take the tests*

When can you take the GED tests? The simple answer is this: If you're eligible and prepared, you can apply to take the GED tests as soon as you want. Just contact your local testing center to get a test schedule, and then pick a day (or days) that works for you.

You can also apply to take the tests if you're not prepared, but if you do that, you don't stand a very good chance of passing. If you do need to retake any of the tests, use your time before your next test to get ready. You can retake the tests only a limited number of times, and, in most jurisdictions, taking the test costs money (check with your local testing center to find out how many times you can retake the test). To save time and money, prepare before you schedule the tests.

### **Are special accommodations available?**

The GED testing centers make every effort to ensure that all qualified people have access to the tests. If you have a disability, you may not be able to register for the tests on Monday and take them on Friday, but, with some advanced planning, you can probably take the tests when you're ready. Here's what you need to do:

- ✔ Contact the GED Testing Service or your local GED center and explain your disability.
- ✔ Request any forms that you have to fill out for your special circumstances.
- ✔ Ensure that you have a recent diagnosis by a physician or other qualified professional.
- ✔ Complete all the proper forms and submit them with medical or professional diagnosis.
- ✔ Start planning early so that you're able to take the tests when you're ready.

Please note that, regardless of your disability, you still have to be able to handle the mental demands of the tests.

The GED Testing Service in Washington, D.C., defines specific disabilities, such as the following, for which it may make special accommodations, provided the disability severely limits your ability to perform essential skills required to pass the GED:

- ✔ Medical disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, or blindness
- ✔ Emotional disabilities, such as schizophrenia, major depression, attention deficit disorder, or Tourette's syndrome
- ✔ Specific learning disabilities, including perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia

## Signing up

To sign up for the test, follow these steps:

1. **Contact your local GED administrator to make sure you're eligible.**
2. **Ask the office for an application (if needed) or an appointment.**
3. **Complete the application (if needed).**
4. **Return the application to the proper office, with payment, if necessary.**

The fees vary state by state, so contact your local administrator or testing site to find out what you have to pay to take the tests. In some states, if you fall into a low-income bracket, you can have the fees paid for you.



Never send cash in an envelope to pay for the GED. Most local administrators have payment rules and don't accept cash.

## Working with unusual circumstances

If you feel that you may have a special circumstance that prevents you from taking the GED tests, contact the GED administrator in your area. If, for example, the tests are going to be held on your Sabbath, the testing center may make special arrangements for you.



When applying for special circumstances, keep the following guidelines in mind:

- ✓ Document everything in your appeal for special consideration.
- ✓ Contact the GED administrator in your area as early as you can.
- ✓ Be patient. Special arrangements can't be made overnight. The administrator often has to wait for a group with similar issues to gather so he can make arrangements for the entire group.
- ✓ Ask questions. Allowances can be made if you ask. For example, special allowances include extended time for various disabilities, large print and Braille for visual impairments, and age (for those individuals older than 60 who feel they may have a learning disability).

## Taking the GED When English Is Your Second Language

The good news is that English doesn't have to be your first language for you to take the GED. The GED tests are offered in English, Spanish, and French. If you want to take the test in Spanish or French, contact your local GED administrator so that you can apply.



If English, Spanish, or French isn't your first language, you must decide whether you read and write English as well as or better than 40 percent of high school graduates because you may be required to pass an English as a Second Language (ESL) Placement test. If you write and read English well, prepare for and take the tests (either in English or in Spanish or French). If you don't read or write English well, take additional classes to prepare yourself in English until you think you're ready. If you want or need more information about the language component of the GED tests, check out the "Your Language" section at [www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ged/test/take/Take\\_GED.htm](http://www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ged/test/take/Take_GED.htm).

## Web sites that can help you plan to take the GED

The Internet is a helpful and sometimes scary place. Some Web sites are there to help you in your GED preparation, while others just want to sell you something. You have to be on alert to separate the good from the bad. Here are a couple of essential ones:

✓ **[www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=GED\\_TS](http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=GED_TS)**: This Web site is the main site for the GED Testing Service. It contains all the essential information you may want to look up as you get ready for the GED. Look around at the various links on this site — you'll find a wealth of useful and relevant information here.

✓ **[www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ged/test/admin.htm](http://www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ged/test/admin.htm)**: If you aren't sure who the GED administrator is in your area, go to this site for a list of all the administrators by location.

If you're curious and want to see what's out there, enter *GED* into any search engine and relax while you try to read about 22,000,000 entries ranging from the helpful to the helpless. We suggest leaving this last activity until after you've passed the tests. As useful as the Internet can be, it still provides the opportunity to waste vast amounts of time. And right now, you need to spend your time preparing for the tests — and leave the rest for after you get your diploma.

In many ways, the GED tests are like the TOEFL (the Test of English as a Foreign Language) comprehension tests. If you've completed the TOEFL tests with good grades, you're likely ready to take the GED. If you haven't taken the TOEFL tests, enroll in a GED preparation course to see whether you have difficulty understanding the subjects and skills assessed on the test. GED courses provide you not only with some insight into your comprehension ability, but also with a teacher to discuss your skills and struggles.

## Eyeing What You Have to Score to Pass the GED

To pass the tests, you have to score at least 410 on each test and have an average score of 450 on the five tests. If you achieve a passing score, congratulate yourself: You've scored better than at least 40 percent of today's high school graduates, and you're now a graduate of the largest virtual school in the country.

The following sections address a few more points you may want to know about how the GED tests are scored and what you can do if you score poorly on some or all of the tests.

### *Identifying how scores are determined*

Except for the essay, each correct answer is worth one point. No matter how hard or easy the question is, if you get it right, you get one point. In each test, the points you get are totaled, and the total converts to a standard score, ranging from 200 to 800 on each test.



Because you don't lose points for incorrect answers, make sure you answer all the questions on each test. After all, a guessed answer can get you a point. Leaving an answer blank, on the other hand, gives you only a zero.

## *Knowing what to do if you score poorly on one or more tests*

If you discover that your average score is less than 450 on any of the tests, start planning to retake the test(s) — and make sure you leave plenty of time for additional studying and preparing.



As soon as possible after seeing your results, contact your local GED administrator to find out the rules for retaking tests. Some states may ask that you wait a certain amount of time. Some may ask that you attend a preparation course and show that you've completed it before you can take the GED tests again. Some may charge you an additional fee.

No matter what score you receive on your first round of tests, don't be afraid to retake any of them that you didn't pass. Now that you've taken them once, you know what you need to work on, and you know exactly what to expect on test day. Just take a deep breath, and get ready to prepare some more before you take your next round of tests.