

Gre practice book essay



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This practice book contains: one full-length paper-based GRE® General Test test-taking strategies sample verbal and quantitative questions with explanations sample analytical writing topics, scored sample essays and reader commentary ® NOTE: The test-taking strategies in this publication are appropriate for the paper-based General Test. The strategies in the GRE® POWERPREP® software are appropriate for the computer-based General Test. This book is provided FREE with test registration by the Graduate Record Examinations Board. For additional test preparation information, visit www.ets.org/gre/greprep.

IMPORTANT The Verbal and Quantitative sections in the GRE General Test in this publication contain questions written and administered prior to 1995. For this reason, some of the material covered in the questions may be dated. For example, a question may refer to a rapidly changing technology in a way that was correct in the 1980s and early 1990s, but not now.

In addition, ETS® has revised and updated its standards and guidelines for test questions so some questions may not meet current standards.

Questions that do not meet current ETS standards, and would not appear in GRE tests administered today, are marked with an asterisk (see pages 35 and 44). Note to Test Takers: Keep this practice book until you receive your score report. This book contains important information about scoring.

® Copyright © 2008 by Educational Testing Service. The GRE General Test is designed to help graduate school admission committees and fellowship sponsors assess the qualifications of applicants to their programs. It

measures verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking and analytical writing skills that you have acquired over a long period of time.

Any accredited graduate or professional school, or any department or division within a school, may require or recommend that its applicants take the GRE General Test.

The scores can be used by admissions or fellowship panels to supplement undergraduate records and other qualifications for graduate study. The scores provide common measures for comparing the qualifications of applicants and aid in the evaluation of grades and recommendations. Review of the Quantitative Section Overview

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11 Structure of the GRE General Test The paper-based GRE General Test contains 7 ve sections. In addition, one unidentified pretest section may be included and this section can appear in any position in the test after the Analytical Writing section. Questions in the pretest section are being pretested for possible use in future tests and answers will not count toward your scores. Total testing time is up to 33/4 hours. The directions at the beginning of each section specify the total number of questions in the section and the time allowed for the section.

The Analytical Writing section will always be first. The Verbal and Quantitative sections may appear in any order, including an unidentified Verbal or Quantitative pretest section. Treat each section presented during your test as if it counts. Review of the Analytical Writing Section Overview ...

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Typical Paper-Based GRE General Test Sections Section Analytical Writing Verbal (2 sections) Quantitative (2 sections) Pretest** Number of Questions 1 Issue task* 1 Argument task* 38 per section 30 per section Varies Time 45 min. 30 min. 30 min. per section 30 min. er section 30 min. * For the Issue task, two essay topics will be presented and you will choose one. The Argument task does not present a choice of topics; instead, one topic will be presented. ** An unidenti? ed Verbal or Quantitative pretest section may be included and may appear in any order after the Analytical Writing section.

Scores Reported Three scores are reported on the General Test: 1. a verbal score reported on a 200–800 score scale, in 10-point increments, 2. a quantitative score reported on a 200–800 score scale, in 10-point increments, and 3. n analytical writing score reported on a 0–6 score scale,

in half-point increments. If you answer no questions at all in a section (verbal, quantitative, or analytical writing), that section will be reported as a No Score (NS). Descriptions of the analytical writing abilities characteristic of particular score levels are available in the interpretive leaflet enclosed with your score report, in the Guide to the Use of GRE Scores, and at ets.org/gre/stupubs.

Preparing for the GRE General Test Preparation for the test will depend on the amount of time you have available and your personal preferences for how to prepare. At a minimum, before you take the GRE General Test, you should know what to expect from the test, including the administrative procedures, types of questions and directions, the approximate number of questions, and the amount of time for each section. The administrative procedures include registration, date, time, test center location, cost, scorereporting procedures, and availability of special testing arrangements. You can find out about the administrative procedures for the paper-based General Test at ets.org/gre, or by contacting GRE at 1-609-771-7670 or 1-866-473-4373 (toll free for test takers in the U. S. , U. S. Territories*, and Canada).

Before taking the practice General Test, it is important to become familiar with the content of each of the sections of the test. You can become familiar with the Verbal and Quantitative sections by reading about the skills the sections measure, how the sections are scored, reviewing the strategies for each of the question types, and reviewing the sample questions with explanations. Determine which strategies work best for you. Remember—you can do very well on the test without answering every question in each section correctly. Everyone—even the most practiced and confident of writers—should spend some time preparing for the Analytical Writing section before arriving at the test center. It is important to

review the skills measured, how the section is scored, scoring guides and score level descriptions, sample topics, scored sample essay responses, and reader commentary. To help you prepare for the Analytical Writing section of the General Test, the GRE Program has published the entire pool of topics from which your test topics will be selected. You might find it helpful to review the Issue and Argument pools. You can view the published pools at ets.org/gre/greprep or obtain a copy by writing to GRE Program, PO Box 6000, Princeton, NJ 08541-6000. The topics in the Analytical Writing section relate to a broad range of subjects—from the fine arts and humanities to the social and physical sciences—but no topic requires specific content knowledge. In fact, each topic has been field-tested to ensure that it possesses several important characteristics, including the following:

- GRE test takers, regardless of their field of study or special interests, understood the topic and could easily discuss it. The topic elicited the kinds of complex thinking and persuasive writing that university faculty consider important for success in graduate school.
- The responses were varied in content and in the way the writers developed their ideas.

* Includes American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and U. S. Virgin Islands

4 Test-Taking Strategies
IMPORTANT NOTE: Test-taking strategies appropriate for the Verbal and Quantitative sections of the paper-based General Test are different from those that are appropriate for taking the Verbal and Quantitative sections of the computer-based General Test. Be sure to follow the appropriate strategies for the testing format in which you will be testing. Paper-based testing strategies should not be used if you take the computer-based test.

Verbal and Quantitative Sections When taking a Verbal or Quantitative section of the paper-based General Test, you are free, within any section, to

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skip questions that you might have difficulty answering and to come back to them later during the time provided to work on that section. You may also change the answer to any question you recorded on the answer sheet by erasing it completely and marking in the oval corresponding to your desired answer for that question. Each of your scores will be determined by the number of questions for which you select the best answer from the choices given. Questions for which you mark no answer or more than one answer are not counted in scoring. Nothing is subtracted from a score if you answer a question incorrectly. Therefore, to maximize your scores on the Verbal and Quantitative sections of the paper-based test, it is better for you to answer each and every question and not to leave any questions unanswered. Work as rapidly as you can without being careless. This includes checking frequently to make sure you are marking your answers in the appropriate rows on your answer sheet. Since no question carries greater weight than any other, do not waste time pondering individual questions you find extremely difficult or unfamiliar. You may want to work through a Verbal or Quantitative section of the General Test quite rapidly, first answering only the questions about which you feel confident, then going back and answering questions that require more thought, and concluding with the most difficult questions if there is time. During the actual administration of the General Test, you may work only on the section the test center supervisor designates and only for the time allowed. You may not go back to an earlier section of the test after the supervisor announces, "Please stop work" for that section. The supervisor is authorized to dismiss you from the center for doing so. All answers must be recorded on your answer sheet. Answers recorded in your test booklet will not be counted. Given the time

constraints, you should avoid waiting until the last few minutes of a test administration to record answers on your answer sheet. Some questions on the General Test have only four response options (A through D). All GRE answer sheets for the paper-based test contain response positions for five responses (A through E). Therefore, if an E response is marked for a four-option question, it will be ignored. An E response for a four-option question is treated the same as no response (omitted).

Analytical Writing Section

In the paper-based General Test, the topics in the Analytical Writing section will be presented in the test book and you will handwrite your essay responses on the answer sheets provided. Make sure you use the correct answer sheet for each task. It is important to budget your time. Within the 45-minute time limit for the Issue task, you will need to allow sufficient time to choose one of the two topics, think about the issue you've chosen, plan a response, and compose your essay. Within the 30-minute time limit for the Argument task, you will need to allow sufficient time to analyze the argument, plan a critique, and compose your response. Although GRE readers understand the time constraints under which you write and will consider your response a "first draft," you still want it to be the best possible example of your writing that you can produce under the testing circumstances. Save a few minutes at the end of each timed task to check for obvious errors. Although an occasional spelling or grammatical error will not affect your score, severe and persistent errors will detract from the overall effectiveness of your writing and thus lower your score. During the actual administration of the General Test, you may work only on the particular writing task the test center supervisor designates and only for the time allowed. You may not go back to an earlier section of the test after

the supervisor announces, " Please stop work," for that task. The supervisor is authorized to dismiss you from the center for doing so. Following the Analytical Writing section, you will have the opportunity to take a 10-minute break. Directions* Each question below consists of a word printed in capital letters followed by five lettered words or phrases. Choose the lettered word or phrase that is most nearly opposite in meaning to the word in capital letters. Since some of the questions require you to distinguish the shades of meaning, be sure to consider all the choices before deciding which one is best. Sample Question DIFFUSE: (A) concentrate (B) contend (C) imply (D) pretend (E) rebel

Strategies for Answering

- Remember that antonyms are generally confined to nouns, verbs, and adjectives.
- Look for the word that is most nearly opposite to the given word.
- Try to define words precisely.
- Make up a sentence using the given word to help establish its meaning.
- Look for possible second meanings before choosing an answer.
- Use your knowledge of prefixes and suffixes to help define words you don't know.

Answer The best answer is (A). Diffuse means to permit or cause to spread out; only (A) presents an idea that is in any way opposite to diffuse. Review of the Verbal Section Overview The Verbal section measures your ability to analyze and evaluate written material and synthesize information obtained from it, to analyze relationships among component parts of sentences, to recognize relationships between words and concepts, and to reason with words in solving problems. There is a balance of passages across different subject matter areas: humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. The Verbal section contains the following question types:

- Antonyms
- Analogies
- Sentence Completions
- Reading Comprehension Questions

How the Verbal Section is Scored Scoring of the Verbal section of the paper-based

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General Test is essentially a two-step process. First, a raw score is computed. The raw score is the number of questions for which the best answer choice was given. The raw score is then converted to a scaled score through a process known as equating. The equating process accounts for differences in difficulty among the different test editions; thus, a given scaled score reflects approximately the same level of ability regardless of the edition of the test that was taken.

Analogies Analogies measure your ability to recognize relationships among words and concepts they represent.

Directions* In each of the following questions, a related pair of words or phrases is followed by lettered pairs of words or phrases. Select the lettered pair that best expresses a relationship similar to that expressed in the original pair.

Antonyms Antonyms measure your ability to reason from a given concept to its opposite.

* The directions are presented as they appear on the actual test.

6 Sample Question COLOR : SPECTRUM : (A) tone : scale (B) sound : waves (C) verse : poem (D) dimension : space (E) cell : organism

Strategies for Answering

- Establish a relationship between the given pair before reading the answer choices.
- Consider relationships of kind, size, spatial contiguity, or degree.
- Read all of the options. If more than one seems correct, try to state the relationship more precisely. Check to see that you haven't overlooked a possible second meaning for one of the words.
- Never decide on the best answer without reading all of the answer choices.

Answer The relationship between color and spectrum is not merely that of part to whole, in which case (E) or even (C) might be defended as correct. A spectrum is made up of a progressive, graduated series of colors, as a scale is of a progressive, graduated sequence of tones. Thus, (A) is the correct answer choice. In this

instance, the best answer must be selected from a group of fairly close choices. Sample Question Early _____ of hearing loss is _____ by the fact that the other senses are able to compensate for moderate amounts of loss, so that people frequently do not know that their hearing is imperfect. (A) discovery . . indicated (B) development . . prevented (C) detection . .

complicated (D) treatment . . facilitated (E) incidence . . corrected Strategies

for Answering • Read the incomplete sentence carefully. • Look for key words or phrases. • Complete the blank(s) with your own words; see if any options are like yours. • Pay attention to grammatical cues. If there are two blanks, be sure that both parts of your answer choice ? t logically and stylistically into the sentence. • After choosing an answer, read the sentence through again to see if it makes sense. Answer The statement that the other senses compensate for partial loss of hearing indicates that the hearing loss is not prevented or corrected; therefore, choices (B) and (E) can be eliminated. Furthermore, the ability to compensate for hearing loss certainly does not facilitate the early treatment (D) or the early discovery (A) of hearing loss. It is reasonable, however, that early detection of hearing loss is complicated by the ability to compensate for it. The best answer is (C).

Sentence Completions Sentence completions measure your ability to recognize words or phrases that both logically and stylistically complete the meaning of a sentence. Directions* Each sentence below has one or two blanks, each blank indicating that something has been omitted. Beneath the sentence are ? ve lettered words or sets of words. Choose the word or set of words for each blank that best ? ts the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

Reading Comprehension Questions Reading comprehension questions measure your ability to • read with understanding, insight, and

discrimination • analyze a written passage from several perspectives

Passages are taken from the humanities, social sciences, and natural

sciences. Directions* The passage is followed by questions based on its

content. After reading the passage, choose the best answer to each

question. Answer all questions following the passage on the basis of what is

stated or implied in the passage. * The directions are presented as they

appear on the actual test. 7 Sample QuestionPicture-taking is a technique

both for annexing the objective world and for expressing the singular self.

Photographs depict objective realities that already exist, though only the

camera can disclose them. And they depict an individual photographer's

temperament, discovering itself through the camera's cropping of reality.

That is, photography has two antithetical ideals: in the first, photography is

about the world, and the photographer is a mere observer who counts for

little; but in the second, photography is the instrument of intrepid, questing

subjectivity and the photographer is all. These conflicting ideals arise from a

fundamental uneasiness on the part of both photographers and viewers of

photographs toward the aggressive component in "taking" a picture.

Accordingly, the ideal of a photographer as observer is attractive because it

implicitly denies that picture-taking is an aggressive act. The issue, of

course, is not so clear-cut. What photographers do cannot be characterized

as simply predatory or as simply, and essentially, benevolent. As a

consequence, one ideal of picture-taking or the other is always being

rediscovered and championed. An important result of the coexistence of

these two ideals is a recurrent ambivalence toward photography's means.

Whatever the claims that photography might make to be a form of personal

expression on a par with painting, its originality is inextricably linked to the

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powers of a machine. The steady growth of these powers has made possible the extraordinary informativeness and imaginative formal beauty of many photographs, like Harold Edgerton's high-speed photographs of a bullet hitting its target or of the swirls and eddies of a tennis stroke. But as cameras become more sophisticated, more automated, some photographers are tempted to disarm themselves or to suggest that they are not really armed, preferring to submit themselves to the limits imposed by premodern camera technology because a cruder, less high-powered machine is thought to give more interesting or emotive results, to leave more room for creative accident. For example, it has been virtually a point of honor for many photographers, including Walker Evans and Cartier-Bresson, to refuse to use modern equipment. These photographers have come to doubt the value of the camera as an instrument of "fast seeing." Cartier-Bresson, in fact, claims that the modern camera may see too fast. This ambivalence toward photographic means determines trends in taste. The cult of the future (of faster and faster seeing) alternates over time with the wish to return to a purer past — when images had a handmade quality. This nostalgia for some pristine state of the photographic enterprise is currently widespread and underlies the present-day enthusiasm for daguerreotypes and the work of forgotten nineteenth-century provincial photographers. Photographers and viewers of photographs, it seems, need periodically to resist their own knowingness.

5) (10) According to the passage, the two antithetical ideals of photography differ primarily in the (A) value that each places on the beauty of the finished product (B) emphasis that each places on the emotional impact of the finished product (C) degree of technical knowledge that each requires of the photographer (D) extent of the power that each requires of

the photographer's equipment (E) way in which each defines the role of the photographer

Strategies for Answering

- Read the passage closely, then proceed to the questions.
- Skim the passage, then reread the passage closely as you answer the questions. You may want to try it both ways with sample questions to see what works best for you.
- Answer questions based on the content of the passage.
- Separate main ideas from supporting ideas.
- Separate the author's own ideas from information being presented.
- Ask yourself... - What is this about? - What are the key points? - How does the main idea relate to other ideas in the passage? - What words define relationships among ideas?

Answer The best answer to this question is (E). Photography's two ideals are presented in lines 7-11. The main emphasis in the description of these two ideals is on the relationship of the photographer to the enterprise of photography, with the photographer described in the one as a passive observer and in the other as an active questioner. (E) identifies this key feature in the description of the two ideals—the way in which each ideal conceives or defines the role of the photographer in photography. (A) through (D) present aspects of photography that are mentioned in the passage, but none of these choices represents a primary difference between the two ideals of photography. (15) (20) (25) 30) (35) (40) (45) (50) (55) 8

Review of the Quantitative Section Overview The Quantitative section measures your basic mathematical skills, your understanding of elementary mathematical concepts, and your ability to reason quantitatively and solve problems in a quantitative setting. There is a balance of questions requiring arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and data analysis. These are content areas usually studied in high school. Arithmetic Questions may involve arithmetic operations, powers, operations on radical expressions, estimation, percent,

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absolute value, properties of integers (e. . , divisibility, factoring, prime numbers, odd and even integers), and the number line. Algebra Questions may involve rules of exponents, factoring and simplifying algebraic expressions, understanding concepts of relations and functions, equations and inequalities, solving linear and quadratic equations and inequalities, solving simultaneous equations, setting up equations to solve word problems, coordinate geometry, including slope, intercepts, and graphs of equations and inequalities, and applying basic algebra skills to solve problems. Geometry Questions may involve parallel lines, circles, triangles (including isosceles, equilateral, and 30° - 60° - 90° triangles), rectangles, other polygons, area, perimeter, volume, the Pythagorean Theorem, and angle measure in degrees. The ability to construct proofs is not measured. Data Analysis Questions may involve elementary probability, basic descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, range, standard deviation, percentiles), and interpretation of data in graphs and tables (line graphs, bar graphs, circle graphs, frequency distributions). Math Symbols and Other Information The following information applies to all questions in the quantitative sections.

- These common math symbols may be used: $x < y$ (x is less than y) $x \neq y$ (x is not equal to y) \sqrt{x} (the nonnegative square root of x , where $x \geq 0$) $|x|$ (the absolute value of x , where x is a real number) $n!$ (n factorial: the product of the first n positive integers) $m \parallel n$ (line m is parallel to line n) $m \perp n$ (line m is perpendicular to line n) $m \angle B C$ ($\angle ABC$ is a right angle)
- Numbers: all numbers used are real numbers. Figures:
 - the positions of points, angles, regions, etc. , can be assumed to be in the order shown;
 - angle measures are positive
 - a line shown as straight can be assumed to be straight
 - figures lie in a plane unless otherwise indicated
 - do not assume ?

figures are drawn to scale unless stated. It is important to familiarize yourself with the basic mathematical concepts in the GRE General Test. The publication Math Review, which is available at ets.org/gre/greprep, provides detailed information on the content of the Quantitative section. The Quantitative section contains the following question types:

- Quantitative Comparison Questions
- Problem Solving - Discrete Quantitative Questions
- Problem Solving - Data Interpretation Questions

Questions emphasize understanding basic principles and reasoning within the context of given information.

9 How the Quantitative Section is Scored

The Quantitative section of the paper-based General Test is scored the same way as the Verbal section. First, a raw score is computed. The raw score is the number of questions for which the best answer choice was given. The raw score is then converted to a scaled score through a process known as equating. The equating process accounts for differences in difficulty among the different test editions; thus a given scaled score reflects approximately the same level of ability regardless of the edition of the test that was taken.

Strategies for Answering

- Avoid extensive computation if possible. Try to estimate the answer.
- Consider all kinds of numbers before deciding. If under some conditions Column A is greater than Column B and for others, Column B is greater than Column A, choose "the relationship cannot be determined from the information given," and go to the next question.
- Geometric figures may not be drawn to scale. Comparisons should be made based on the given information, together with your knowledge of mathematics, rather than on exact appearance.

Answer to Question 1 denotes $\sqrt{10}$, the positive square root of 10. (For any positive number x , \sqrt{x} denotes the positive number whose square is x .) Since $\sqrt{10}$ is greater than 9, the best answer is (B). It is

important not to confuse this question with a comparison of 9.8 and x where $x^2 \geq 100$. The latter comparison would yield (D) as the correct answer because $x^2 \geq 100$ implies that either $x \geq 10$ or $x \leq -10$, and there would be no way to determine which value x would actually have.

Answer to Question 2 Since $(-6)^4$ is the product of four negative factors, and the product of an even number of negative numbers is positive, $(-6)^4$ is positive. Since the product of an odd number of negative numbers is negative, $(-6)^5$ is negative. Therefore, $(-6)^4$ is greater than $(-6)^5$ since any positive number is greater than any negative number. The best answer is (A). It is not necessary to calculate that $7,776$ in order to $(-6)^4 = 1,296$ and that $(-6)^5 = -7,776$ make the comparison.

Quantitative Comparison Questions Quantitative comparison questions measure your ability to:

- reason quickly and accurately about the relative sizes of two quantities
- perceive that not enough information is provided to make such a decision

Directions* Each of the sample questions consists of two quantities, one in Column A and one in Column B. There may be additional information, centered above the two columns, that concerns one or both of the quantities. A symbol that appears in both columns represents the same thing in Column A as it does in Column B. You are to compare the quantity in Column A with the quantity in Column B and decide whether:

(A) The quantity in Column A is greater. (B) The quantity in Column B is greater. (C) The two quantities are equal. (D) The relationship cannot be determined from the information given. Note: Since there are only four choices, NEVER MARK (E).

** Sample Questions

Column A	1. 9.8	2. $(-6)^4$
Column B	$(-6)^5$	

Problem Solving — Discrete Quantitative Questions Discrete quantitative questions measure

- basic mathematical knowledge
- your ability to read, understand, and solve a problem that involves either an

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actual or an abstract situation Directions* Each of the following questions has 5 answer choices. For each of these questions, select the best of the answer choices given. ** 10 The directions are presented as they appear on the actual test. The answer sheet contains 5 choices for the Verbal and Quantitative sections. Sample Question When walking, a certain person takes 16 complete steps in 10 seconds. At this rate, how many complete steps does the person take in 72 seconds? (A) 45 (B) 78 (C) 86 (D) 90 (E) 115

Strategies for Answering • Determine what is given and what is being asked.

- Scan all answer choices before answering a question.
- When approximation is required, scan answer choices to determine the degree of approximation.
- Avoid long computations. Use reasoning instead, when possible. Answer 72 seconds represents 7 ten-second intervals plus $\frac{2}{10}$ of such an interval. Therefore, the person who takes 16 steps in 10 seconds will take $(7.2)(16)$ steps in 72 seconds. $(7.2)(16) = (7)(16) + (0.2)(16) = 112 + 3.2 = 115.2$

2 Since the question asks for the number of complete steps, the best answer choice is (E). Sample Question Number of Graduate Student Applicants at University X, 1982–1991

Year	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Applicants	1,400	1,200	1,000	800	600	400	200	0	1982	1983

In which of the following years did the number of graduate student applicants increase the most from that of the previous year? (A) 1985 (B) 1986 (C) 1988 (D) 1990 (E) 1991

Strategies for Answering • Scan the set of data to see what it is about. Try to make visual comparisons and estimate products and quotients rather than perform computations. • Answer questions only on the basis of data given.

Answer This question can be answered directly by visually comparing the heights of the bars in the graph. The greatest increase in height between two adjacent bars occurs for the years 1985 and 1986. The best answer is (B).

Problem Solving — Data Interpretation Questions Data interpretation questions measure your ability • to synthesize information and select appropriate data for answering a question • to determine that sufficient information for answering a question is not provided The data interpretation questions usually appear in sets and are based on data presented in tables, graphs, or other diagrams. Directions* Each of the following questions has five answer choices. For each of these questions, select the best of the answer choices given. * The directions are presented as they appear on the actual test.

11 Review of the Analytical Writing Section Overview

The Analytical Writing section tests your critical thinking and analytical writing skills. It assesses your ability to articulate and support complex ideas, analyze an argument, and sustain a focused and coherent discussion. It does not assess specific content knowledge. The Analytical Writing section consists of two separately-timed analytical writing tasks: • a 45-minute “Present Your Perspective on an Issue” task • a 30-minute “Analyze an Argument” task

You will be given a choice between two Issue topics. Each states an opinion on an issue of broad interest and asks you to discuss the issue from any perspective(s) you wish, as long as you provide relevant reasons and examples to explain and support your views. You will not have a choice of Argument topics. The Argument task presents a different challenge from that of the Issue task: it requires you to critique a given argument by discussing how well reasoned you find it. You will need to consider the logical soundness of the argument rather than to agree or disagree with the position it presents. The two tasks are complementary in that one requires you to construct your own argument by taking a position and providing evidence supporting your views on the issue, whereas the other requires you to

critique someone else's argument by assessing its claims and evaluating the evidence it provides. Organization or poor organization, for example, will be part of the readers' overall impression of the response and will therefore contribute to the score, but organization, as a distinct feature, has no specific weight. In general, GRE readers are college and university faculty experienced in teaching courses in which writing and critical thinking skills are important. All GRE readers have undergone careful training, passed stringent GRE qualifying tests, and demonstrated that they are able to maintain scoring accuracy. To ensure fairness and objectivity in scoring • responses are randomly distributed to the readers • all identifying information about the test takers is concealed from the readers • each response is scored by two readers • readers do not know what other scores a response may have received • the scoring procedure requires that each response receive identical or adjacent scores from two readers; any other score combination is adjudicated by a third GRE reader The scores given for the two tasks are then averaged for a final reported score. The score level descriptions, presented in Appendix A on page 53, provide information on how to interpret the total score on the Analytical Writing section. The primary emphasis in scoring the Analytical Writing section is on critical thinking and analytical writing skills. Your essay responses on the Analytical Writing section will be reviewed by ETS® essay-similaritydetection software and by experienced essay readers during the scoring process. In light of the high value placed on independent intellectual activity within United States graduate schools and universities, ETS reserves the right to cancel test scores of any test taker when there is substantial evidence that an essay response includes, but is not limited to, any of the following: • text that is similar to

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that found in one or more other GRE essay responses; • quoting or paraphrasing, without attribution, language that appears in published or unpublished sources; • unacknowledged use of work that has been produced through collaboration with others without citation of the contribution of others; • essays that are submitted as work of the examinee when the words have, in fact, been borrowed from elsewhere or prepared by another person.

How the Analytical Writing Section is Scored Each response is holistically scored on a 6-point scale according to the criteria published in the GRE analytical writing scoring guides (see Appendix A on pages 51–52). Holistic scoring means that each response is judged as a whole: readers do not separate the response into component parts and award a certain number of points for a particular criterion or element such as ideas, organization, sentence structure, or language. Instead, readers assign scores based on the overall quality of the response, considering all of its characteristics in an integrated way. Excellent 12 When one or more of these circumstances occurs, your essay text, in ETS's professional judgement, does not reflect the independent, analytical writing skills that this test seeks to measure.

Therefore, ETS must cancel the essay score as invalid and cannot report the GRE General Test scores of which the essay score is an indispensable part. Test takers whose scores are canceled will forfeit their test fees and must pay to take the entire GRE General Test again at a future administration. No record of score cancellations, or the reason for cancellation, will appear on their future score reports sent to colleges and universities. correct position to take. Instead, the readers are evaluating the skill with which you articulate and develop an argument to support your position on the issue.

Understanding the Context for Writing: Purpose and Audience The Issue task

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is an exercise in critical thinking and persuasive writing. The purpose of this task is to determine how well you can develop a compelling argument supporting your own perspective on an issue and to effectively communicate that argument in writing to an academic audience. Your audience consists of college and university faculty who are trained as GRE readers to apply the scoring criteria identified in the scoring guide for “Present Your Perspective on an Issue” (see page 51). To get a clearer idea of how GRE readers apply the Issue scoring criteria to actual responses, you should review scored sample Issue essay responses and readers’ commentaries. The sample responses, particularly at the 5 and 6 score levels, will show you a variety of successful strategies for organizing, developing, and communicating a persuasive argument. The readers’ commentaries discuss specific aspects of analysis and writing, such as the use of examples, development and support, organization, language fluency, and word choice. For each response, the commentary points out aspects that are particularly persuasive as well as any that detract from the overall effectiveness of the essay. Preparing for the Issue Task Because the Issue task is meant to assess the persuasive writing skills that you have developed throughout your education, it has been designed neither to require any particular course of study nor to advantage students with a particular type of training. Many college textbooks on composition offer advice on persuasive writing that you might find useful, but even this advice might be more technical and specialized than you need for the Issue task. You will not be expected to know specific critical thinking or writing terms or strategies; instead, you should be able to use reasons, evidence, and examples to support your position on an issue. Suppose, for instance, that an Issue topic asks you to consider whether it is important for

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government to provide financial support for art museums. If your position is that government should fund art museums, you might support your position by discussing the reasons art is important and explain that museums are public.

Present Your Perspective on an Issue Task

The “Present Your Perspective on an Issue” task assesses your ability to think critically about a topic of general interest and to clearly express your thoughts about it in writing. Each topic, presented in quotation marks, makes a claim about an issue that test takers can discuss from various perspectives and apply to many different situations or conditions. Your task is to present a compelling case for your own position on the issue. Be sure to read the claim carefully and think about it from several points of view, considering the complexity of ideas associated with those perspectives. Then, make notes about the position you want to develop and list the main reasons and examples that you could use to support that position. The Issue task allows considerable latitude in the way you respond to the claim. Although it is important that you address the central issue, you are free to take any approach you wish.

For example, you might

- agree absolutely with the claim, disagree completely, or agree with some parts and not others
- question the assumptions the statement seems to be making
- qualify any of its terms, especially if the way you define or apply a term is important to developing your perspective on the issue
- point out why the claim is valid in some situations but not in others
- evaluate points of view that contrast with your own perspective
- develop your position with reasons that are supported by several relevant examples or by a single extended example

The GRE readers scoring your response are not looking for a “right” answer—in fact, there is no right answer. For example, if your position is that there are too many places where art is available to anyone. On the other hand, if your

position is that government should not support museums, you might point out that, given limited governmental funds, art museums are not as deserving of governmental funding as are other, more socially important, institutions. Or, if you are in favor of government funding for art museums only under certain conditions, you might focus on the artistic criteria, cultural concerns, or political conditions that you think should determine how—or whether—art museums receive government funds. It is not your position that matters so much as the critical thinking skills you display in developing your position. An excellent way to prepare for the Issue task is to practice writing on some of the published topics. There is no “best” approach: some people prefer to start practicing without regard to the 45-minute time limit; others prefer to take a “timed test” first and practice within the time limit. No matter which approach you take when you practice the Issue task, you should review the task directions, then

- carefully read the claim made in the topic and make sure you understand the issue involved; if it seems unclear, discuss it with a friend or teacher
- think about the issue in relation to your own ideas and experiences, to events you have read about or observed, and to people you have known; this is the knowledge base from which you will develop compelling reasons and examples in your argument that reinforce, negate, or qualify the claim in some way
- decide what position on the issue you want to take and defend—remember you are free to agree or disagree completely or to agree with some parts or some applications but not others
- decide what compelling evidence (reasons and examples) you can use to support your position

Remember that this is a task in critical thinking and persuasive writing. Therefore, you might find it helpful to explore the complexity of a claim in one of the topics by asking yourself the following

questions: • What, precisely, is the central issue? • Do I agree with all or with any part of the claim? Why or why not? • Does the claim make certain assumptions? If so, are they reasonable? • Is the claim valid only under certain conditions? If so, what are they? • Do I need to explain how I interpret certain terms or concepts used in the claim? • If I take a certain position on the issue, what reasons support my position? • What examples—either real or hypothetical— could I use to illustrate those reasons and advance my point of view? Which examples are most compelling? Once you have decided on a position to defend, consider the perspective of others who might not agree with your position. Ask yourself: • What reasons might someone use to refute or undermine my position? • How should I acknowledge or defend against those views in my essay? To plan your response, you might want to summarize your position and make brief notes about how you will support the position you’re going to take. When you’ve done this, look over your notes and decide how you will organize your response. Then write a response developing your position on the issue. Even if you don’t write a full response, you should find it helpful to practice with a few of the Issue topics and to sketch out your possible responses. After you have practiced with some of the topics, try writing responses to some of the topics within the 45-minute time limit so that you have a good idea of how to use your time in the actual test. Next, compare your response to the scoring guide. Focus on seeing how your paper meets or misses the performance standards and what you therefore need to do in order to improve. Deciding Which Issue Topic to Choose Remember that the General Test will contain two Issue topics from the published pool; you must choose one of these two. Because the 45-minute timing begins when you first see the two topics, you

should not spend too much time making a decision. Instead, try to choose fairly quickly the issue that you feel better prepared to discuss. Before making a choice, read each topic carefully. Then decide on which topic you could develop a more effective and well-reasoned argument. In making this decision, you might ask yourself:

- Which topic do I find more interesting or engaging?
- Which topic more closely relates to my own academic studies or other experiences?
- On which topic can I more clearly explain and defend my perspective?
- On which topic can I more readily think of strong reasons and examples to support my position?

Your answers to these questions should help you make your choice.

The Form of Your Response

You are free to organize and develop your response in any way that you think will effectively communicate your ideas about the issue. Your response may, but need not, incorporate particular writing strategies learned in English composition or writing-intensive college courses. GRE readers will not be looking for a particular developmental strategy or mode of writing; in fact, when GRE readers are trained, they review hundreds of Issue responses that, although highly diverse in content and form, display similar levels of critical thinking and persuasive writing. Readers will see, for example, some Issue responses at the 6 score level that begin by briefly summarizing the writer's position on the issue and then explicitly announcing the main points to be argued. They will see others that lead into the writer's position by making a prediction, asking a series of questions, describing a scenario, or defining critical terms in the quotation. The readers know that a writer can earn a high score by giving multiple examples or by presenting a single, extended example. Look at the sample Issue responses, particularly at the 5 and 6 score levels, to see how other writers have successfully developed and

organized their arguments. You should use as many or as few paragraphs as you consider appropriate for your argument—for example, you will probably need to create a new paragraph whenever your discussion shifts to a new cluster of ideas. What matters is not the number of examples, the number of paragraphs, or the form your argument takes but, rather, the cogency of your ideas about the issue and the clarity and skill with which you communicate those ideas to academic readers.

Directions* Present your perspective on the issue below, using relevant reasons and/or examples to support your views.

Sample Topic “ In our time, specialists of all kinds are highly overrated. We need more generalists—people who can provide broad perspectives. ”

*** Strategies for this Topic** This claim raises several related questions: What does it mean to be a generalist or a specialist, and what value do they have for society? Does society actually need more generalists, and are specialists, in fact, “ highly overrated”? There are several basic positions you could take on this issue: Yes, society needs more generalists and places too high a value on specialists. No, the opposite is true. Or, it depends on various factors. Or, both groups are important in today’s culture; neither is overvalued. Your analysis might draw examples from a particular society or country, from one or more areas of society, or from various situations. It might focus on the role of generalists and specialists in relation to communications, transportation, politics, information, or technology. Any of these approaches is valid, as long as you use relevant reasons and examples to support your position. Before you stake out a position, take a few moments to reread the claim. To analyze it, consider questions such as these:

- What are the main differences between specialists and generalists? What are the strong points of each?
- Do these differences always hold in

various professions or situations? Could there be some specialists, for example, who also need to have very broad knowledge and general abilities to perform their work well? • How do generalists and specialists function in your world? • What value do you think society places on specialists and generalists? Are specialists overvalued in some situations, and not in others? • Does society really need more generalists than it has? If so, what needs would they serve? Now you can organize your thoughts into two groups: • Reasons and examples to support the claim • Reasons and examples to support an opposing point of view If you find one view clearly more persuasive than the other, consider developing an argument from that perspective. As you build your argument, keep in mind the other points, which you could argue against. If both groups have compelling points, consider developing a position supporting, not the stated claim, but a more limited or more complex claim. The directions are presented as they appear on the actual test. 15 Then you can use reasons and examples from both sides to justify your position. Essay Response* – Score 6 In this era of rapid social and technological change leading to increasing life complexity and psychological displacement, both positive and negative effects among persons in Western society call for a balance in which there are both specialists and generalists. Specialists are necessary in order to allow society as a whole to properly and usefully assimilate the masses of new information and knowledge that have come out of research and have been widely disseminated through mass global media. As the head of Pharmacology at my university once said (and I paraphrase): “ I can only research what I do because there are so many who have come before me to whom I can turn for basic knowledge. It is only because of each of the narrowly focussed

individuals at each step that a full and true understanding of the complexities of life can be had. Each person can only hold enough knowledge to add one small rung to the ladder, but together we can climb to the moon. " This illustrates the point that our societies level of knowledge and technology is at a stage in which there simply must be specialists in order for our society to take advantage of the information available to us. Simply put, without specialists, our society would find itself bogged down in the Sargasso sea of information overload. While it was possible for early physicists to learn and understand the few laws and ideas that existed during their times, now, no one individual can possibly digest and assimilate all of the knowledge in any given area. On the other hand, Over specialization means narrow focii in which people can lose the larger picture. No one can hope to understand the human body by only inspecting one's own toe-nails. What we learn from a narrow focus may be internally logically coherent but may be irrelevant or fallacious within the framework of a broader perspective. Further, if we inspect only our toe-nails, we may conclude that the whole body is hard and white. Useful conclusions and thus perhaps useful inventions must come by sharing among specialists. Simply throwing out various discoveries means we have a pile of useless discoveries, it is only when one can make with them a mosaic that we can see that they may form a picture. * Not only may over-specialization be dangerous in terms of the truth, purity and cohesion of knowledge, but it can also serve to drown moral or universal issues. Generalists and only generalists can see a broad enough picture to realize and introduce to the world the problems of the environment. With specialization, each person focusses on their research and their goals. Thus, industrialization, expansion,

and new technologies are driven ahead. Meanwhile no individual can see the wholistic view of our global existence in which true advancement may mean sti? ing individual specialists for the greater good of all. Finally, over-specialization in a people’s daily lives and jobs has meant personal and psychological compartmentalization. People are forced into pigeon holes early in life (at least by university) and must consciously attempt to consume external forms of stimuli and information in order not to be lost in their small and isolated universe. Not only does this make for narrowly focussed and generally poorly educated individuals, but it guarantees a sense of loss of community, often followed by a feeling of psychological displacement and personal dissatisfaction. Without generalists, society becomes inwardlooking and eventually inef? cient. Without a society that recongnizes the impotance of braod-mindedness and fora for sharing generalities, individuals become isolated. Thus, while our form of society necessitates specialists, generalists are equally important. Specialists drive us forward in a series of thrusts while generalists make sure we are still on the jousting ? eld and know what the stakes are.

Reader Commentary for Essay Response – Score 6 This is an outstanding analysis of the issue—insightful, well reasoned, and highly effective in its use of language. The introductory paragraph nounces the writer’s position on the issue and provides the context within which the writer will develop that position: “ In this era of rapid social and technological change leading to increasing life complexity and psychological displacement” The argument itself has two parts. The ? rst part presents a compelling case for specialization, primarily in the ? eld of medicine. The second part presents an equally compelling, well-organized case against overspecialization based on three main reasons: • logical

(narrowly trained specialists often fail to understand the whole) All responses in this publication are reproduced exactly as written, including errors, misspellings, etc. , if any. 16 moral (usually generalists understand what is needed for “ the greater good”) • personal (specializing/pigeonholing too early can be psychologically damaging) The argument’s careful line of reasoning is further strengthened by the skillful use of expert testimony (quotation from a prominent medical researcher) and vivid metaphor (to inspect only one’s toenails is to ignore the whole body). It is not only the reasoning that distinguishes this response. The language is precise and often figurative (“ bogged down in a Sargasso sea of information overload,” “ a pile of useless discoveries,” and “ specialists drive us forward in a series of thrusts, while generalists make sure we are still on the jousting field”). The reader is constantly guided through the argument by transitional phrases and ideas that help organize the ideas and move the argument forward. This is an exceptionally fine response to the topic. Essay Response - Score 5

Specialists are not overrated today. More generalists may be needed, but not to overshadow the specialists. Generalists can provide a great deal of information on many topics of interest with a broad range of ideas. People who look at the overall view of things can help with some of the large problems our society faces today. But specialists are necessary to gain a better understanding of more in depth methods to solve problems or fixing things. One good example of why specialists are not overrated is in the medical field. Doctors are necessary for people to live healthy lives. When a person is sick, he may go to a general practitioner to find out the cause of his problems. Usually, this kind of “ generalized” doctor can help most ailments with simple and effective treatments. Sometimes, though, a

sickness may go beyond a family doctor's knowledge or the prescribed treatments don't work the way they should. When a sickness progresses or becomes diagnosed as a disease that requires more care than a family doctor can provide, he may be referred to a specialist. For instance, a person with constant breathing problems that require hospitalization may be suggested to visit an asthma specialist. Since a family doctor has a great deal of knowledge of medicine, he can decide when his methods are not effective and the patient needs to see someone who knows more about the specific problem; someone who knows how it begins, progresses, and specific treatments. This is an excellent example of how a generalist person may not be equipped enough to handle something as well as a specialized one can. Another example of a specialist who is needed instead of a generalist involves teaching. In grammar school, children learn all the basic principles of reading, writing, and arithmetic. But as children get older and progress in school, they gain a better understanding of the language and mathematical processes. As the years in school increase, they need to learn more and more specifics and details about various subjects. They start out by learning basic math concepts such as addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication. A few years later, they are ready to begin algebraic concepts, geometry, and calculus. They are also ready to learn more advanced vocabulary, the principles of how all life is composed and how it functions. One teacher or professor can not provide as much in depth discussion on all of these topics as well as one who has learned the specifics and studied mainly to know everything that is currently known about one of these subjects. Generalized teachers are required to begin molding students at a very early age so they can get ready for the future ahead of them in gaining

more facts about the basic subjects and ? ding out new facts on the old ones. These are only two examples of why specialists are not highly overrated and more generalists are not necessary to the point of overshadowing them.

Generalists are needed to give the public a broad understanding of some things. But , specialists are important to help maintain the status, health, and safety of our society. Specialists are very necessary. Reader

Commentary for Essay Response – Score 5 This writer presents a well-developed analysis of the complexities of the issue by discussing the need for both the generalist and the specialist. The argument is rooted in two extended examples, both well chosen. The ? st (paragraph 2) begins with a discussion of the necessity for medical generalists (the general practitioner) as well as specialists and moves into an example within the example (breathing problems and the need for an asthma specialist). This extension from the general to the speci? c characterizes the example in the next paragraph as well. There, the discussion centers on education from elementary to high school, from basic arithmetic to calculus. 17 The smooth development is aided by the use of appropriate transitions: “ but,” “ usually,” and “ for instance,” among others. The essay ends by revisiting the writer’s thesis. While the writer handles language and syntax well, several lapses in clarity keep this otherwise wellargued response out of the 6 category. The problems vary from the lack of a pronoun referent (“ When a sickness progresses or becomes diagnosed, . . . he may be referred to a specialist”) to an error in parallel structure (“ how it begins, progresses and speci? ed treatments”), to loose syntax and imprecise language (“ Generalized teachers are required to begin molding students at a very early age so they can get ready for the future ahead of them in gaining more facts about the

basic subjects. ") Essay Response - Score 4 Specialists are just what their name says: people who specialize in one part of a very general scheme of things. A person can't know everything there is to know about everything. This is why specialists are helpful. You can take one general concept and divide it up three ways and have three fully developed different concepts instead of one general concept that no one really knows about. Isn't it better to really know something well, than to know everything half-way. Take a special ed teacher compared to a general ed teacher. The general ed teacher knows how to deal with most students. She knows how to teach a subject to a student that is on a normal level. But what would happen to the child in the back of the room with dyslexia? She would be so lost in that general ed classroom that she would not only not learn, but be frustrated and quite possibly, have low self-esteem and hate school. If there is a special ed teacher there who specializes in children with learning disabilities, she can teach the general ed teacher how to cope with this student as well as modify the curriculum so that the student can learn along with the others. The special ed teacher can also take that child for a few hours each day and work with her on her reading difficulty one-on-one, which a general ed teacher never would have time to do. A general ed teacher can't know what a special ed teacher knows and a special ed teacher can't know what a general ed teacher knows. But the two of them working together and specializing in their own things can really get a lot more accomplished. The special ed teacher is also trained to work on the child's self-esteem, which has a big part in how successful this child will be. Every child in the United States of America has the right to an equal education. How can a child with a learning disability receive the same equal education as a general ed student

if there was no specialist there to help both teacher and child? Another thing to consider is how a committee is supposed to work together. Each person has a special task to accomplish and when these people all come together, with their tasks finished, every aspect of the community's work is completely covered. Nothing is left undone. In this case there are many different specialists to meet the general goal of the committee. When you take into account that a specialist contributes only a small part of the generalist aspect, it seems ridiculous to say that specialists are overrated. The generalists look to the specialists any time they need help or clarification on their broad aspect. Specialists and generalists are part of the same system, so if a specialist is overrated, then so is a generalist. Reader Commentary for Essay Response - Score 4 This is an adequate analysis of the issue. After a somewhat confusing attempt to define "specialists" in the introduction