

THE GED TESTS

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THE GED TESTS

If you left high school without graduating, the GED Tests provide a way for you to earn your GED high school diploma. Getting your GED Diploma can make a big difference in your life. Read this Information Bulletin and learn:

- * What is covered on the GED Tests
- * How to prepare for the GED Tests
- * Where to get help

READ ON!

WHAT IS THE GED TESTING PROGRAM?

The GED testing program offers you an opportunity to earn a GED high school diploma. Many people who did not finish high school have knowledge and skills comparable to people who did graduate. This idea is the basis of the GED testing program. The GED Tests ask questions about subjects covered in high school. The GED Tests are given in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. territories, most Canadian provinces, and the Canadian territories. Each year, about one-half million people earn their GED Diplomas.

The GED Tests are available in English, Spanish, and French. Special large-print, audiocassette, and braille editions of the GED Tests are also available, and adaptations to testing conditions are permitted for adults with disabilities.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A GED DIPLOMA?

Education

The GED program provides an opportunity for adults to

continue their education. Ninety-three percent of colleges and universities accept GED graduates who meet their other qualifications for admission.

Employment

A GED Diploma documents that you have high school-level skills. Approximately 96 percent of employers accept the GED Diploma as equivalent to a traditional high school diploma.

Self-Esteem

Many GED graduates say they have feelings of increased self-esteem and self-confidence.

Once you earn your GED Diploma, it's up to you to pursue the individual goals you set for yourself.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO TAKE THE GED TESTS?

If you left high school without graduating and your high school class has graduated, you are probably eligible to take the GED Tests. Contact your nearest GED Testing Center or the department of education in your state, territory, or province for specific eligibility requirements. Information on where to call is given on pages 15 and 16 of this Bulletin.

HOW CAN I DECIDE IF I AM READY TO TAKE THE GED TESTS?

It's a good idea to take the Official GED Practice Tests before taking the actual GED Tests. Comparing your Practice Test scores with the minimum scores required in your area will help you decide whether you are ready to take the full-length GED Tests. If your scores are high, you have a good chance of passing the GED Tests. If your Practice Test scores are low, you will probably need further study in one or more subject areas. The Official GED Practice Tests are available through your local adult education program. You can also purchase the Practice Tests yourself by ordering Form CC of the Official GED Practice Tests. See order information on the back page of this Bulletin.

HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR THE GED TESTS?

By Attending Classes...

If you need help deciding whether you're ready to take the GED Tests or if you want help preparing for the tests, contact an adult education program in your community. Many programs that are sponsored by local school districts, colleges, and community organizations provide GED classes. The teachers at these adult education programs can help you decide whether you need to study for all of the tests, or whether you should spend time brushing up in just a few areas.

To get information regarding a program in your area, contact your local high school, adult education program, or community college. Look in the yellow pages of your local telephone directory under the heading "Schools." Check the listings for the high schools and community colleges in your area.

Programs offered by schools and colleges may be listed under the heading "Adult Education," "Continuing Education," or "GED." You can also call the general number listed for high schools, colleges, or your board of education and ask for information about GED classes.

If you cannot locate an adult education program in your area, call the number listed for your state, province, or territory on pages 15 and 16 of this Bulletin.

By Yourself...

After reading this Bulletin and possibly taking the Official GED Practice Tests, you may decide that you want to study on your own before you take the actual GED Tests. If you can't answer some questions in this Bulletin or on the Official GED Practice Tests correctly because you have not studied these subjects in a long time, you may be able to improve your skills by studying on your own. In fact, about 20% of all GED test-takers prepare for the GED Tests in this way. Many study materials that are available through libraries, adult education centers, schools, colleges, and book stores may help you improve your skills. There is also a television series called

"GED on TV" on The Learning Channel and many public television stations throughout the country. To find out what channel in your area carries the "GED on TV" series, call 1-800-354-9067. You may also call The Learning Line at 1-800-232-2775 to find out about self-study materials that you may purchase.

WHERE CAN I TAKE THE GED TESTS?

You can take the GED Tests at one of more than 3,000 Official GED Testing Centers in the United States and Canada. There is probably an Official GED Testing Center not far from your home. Call your nearest adult education program and ask for the location and schedule of the testing center near you. Or contact your state, territorial, or provincial department of education and ask for the location and schedule of the closest Official GED Testing Center (see pages 15 and 16 of this Bulletin).

WHAT ARE THE GED TESTS LIKE?

The GED Tests measure important knowledge and skills expected of high school graduates. The five GED Tests are:

- * Writing Skills
- * Social Studies
- * Science
- * Interpreting Literature and the Arts
- * Mathematics

These tests contain multiple-choice questions that test your ability to understand and use information or ideas. In many cases, you are asked to use the information provided to solve a problem, find causes and effects, or make a judgment. Very few questions ask about narrow definitions or specific facts. Instead, the focus of questions is on the major and lasting skills and knowledge expected of high school graduates.

In addition to the multiple-choice questions, the Writing Skills Test includes an essay section. In this section, you are given 45 minutes to write an essay on the topic given. The topics are designed to be very general, so everyone can think

of something to write. More information about the essay is given later in this Bulletin.

The multiple-choice questions on the five GED Tests are presented in one of three ways:

- * Accompanied by a reading selection that may be as brief as one or two sentences or as long as 400 words
- * Accompanied by a table, graph, chart, or illustration
- * Stated as a problem to be solved (this type is most often used in the Mathematics Test)

Because most material presented in the GED Tests requires the ability to understand written text, the skill of reading comprehension is very important.

WHAT SUBJECTS ARE ON THE GED TESTS?

The next section of this Bulletin shows sample questions from each of the GED Tests, along with explanations of the correct answers. Read the sample questions to become familiar with the type of material you will find on the GED Tests.

Do not be discouraged if you feel that the questions are too hard. Most people who have been out of high school for some time need to prepare for the GED Tests before taking them. Adult education programs in your community are specially designed to help you improve your skills so that you can succeed on the GED Tests.

TEST ONE: WRITING SKILLS

The GED Writing Skills Test has two parts. Part One contains multiple-choice questions that require you to correct or revise sentences that appear in a writing selection. Part Two asks you to write an essay about a subject or an issue that is familiar.

Test One, Part One: Multiple-Choice Questions

This section of the Writing Skills Test contains paragraphs with numbered sentences followed by questions based on those sentences. Each writing selection contains about 10 to 14 numbered sentences in one or more paragraphs.

Questions in this section cover sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. You will be asked to identify and correct errors that occur in sentences throughout the selection.

Directions and Sample Questions for Writing Skills, Part One

Directions: Choose the one best answer to each item.

Items 1 to 3 refer to the following paragraph.

(1) One of the lifelong memories many of us share are the moment we obtained a driver's license. (2) If we were teenagers at the time, these licenses signified our passage to adulthood. (3) We clearly remember practicing to handle a car well in heavy traffic and learning to parallel park. (4) We also prepared for the test by studying the driver's booklet, memorizing rules, and learning road signs. (5) Because we dreaded possible disaster, the road test seemed worse than the written test. (6) While conducting these difficult tests, the state driving inspectors often seemed stern and unyielding. (7) Therefore, when all the tests were finally over, we felt a real sense of achievement. (8) Whether or not we have chosen to use our licenses since then, they remain of enormous value to us. (9) They symbolize our passport both to independence and to the open road.

1. Sentence 1: One of the lifelong memories many of us share are the moment we obtained a driver's license.

What correction should be made to this sentence?

- (1) change the spelling of memories to memorys
- (2) insert a comma after memories
- (3) change are to is
- (4) change driver's to drivers
- (5) no correction is necessary

Correct Answer: 3

Difficulty Level: Moderately difficult

About half of the questions in this section of the test ask you to find and correct any errors in the sentence. Because the subject of this sentence is One (not memories), the main verb in the sentence, (are) must agree in number. Thus, the correct answer is (3) "change are to is." Options 1, 2, and 4 introduce errors into the sentence, so none of these is the best answer. Notice that this item type has an alternative (5) "no correction is necessary." Choose this alternative when there is no error.

2. Sentence 3: We clearly-remember practicing to handle a car well in heavy traffic and learning to parallel park.

Which of the following is the best way to write the underlined portion of this sentence? If you think the original is the best way, choose option (1).

- (1) traffic and learning
- (2) traffic, but learning
- (3) traffic, for learning
- (4) traffic, so learning
- (5) traffic because learning

Correct Answer: 1

Difficulty Level: Moderately difficult

This question asks you to select the best word to join the two parts of the sentence. The best answer can be found by determining which word makes the most sense. Only the word and produces a sentence in which the meaning is clear: the two things we remember are practicing to handle a car well and learning to parallel park. Since the relationship between the two parts of the sentence is one of addition, and is the best choice. Note that in this question, the original wording is the best of the choices given.

3. Sentence 7: Therefore, when all the tests were finally over, we felt a real sense of achievement.

If you rewrote sentence 7 beginning with

Therefore, we felt a real sense of achievement
the next word should be

- (1) or
- (2) all
- (3) when
- (4) while
- (5) but

Correct Answer: 3
Difficulty Level: Easy

Questions like this one require you to restate the original sentence in a particular way, often using a different type of sentence structure. The important point to remember here is that the new version must retain the meaning of the original sentence. In the case of question 3, the position of the two parts in the sentence is switched. Only the word "when" keeps the same meaning. Every other choice creates either a nonsense sentence or one in which the meaning is different from the original. In these types of questions, it is always useful to try out each of the alternatives in the new structure. By reading through the entire revised sentence, you will be better able to see the effect of each of the options on the meaning of the sentence.

Test One, Part Two: The Essay

This part of the Writing Skills Test measures your ability to write an essay about an issue or situation of general interest. No special or technical knowledge is required to write on any of the topics. All of the topics used for this part of the test require you to write an essay that presents your opinion or explains your views about the topic assigned.

How the Essay Section Is Scored

All essays written for the GED Writing Skills Test are

scored by at least two trained readers who score the essays on their overall effectiveness. They will judge how clearly you make the main point of your composition, how thoroughly you support your ideas, and how clearly and correctly you write. That is, all of the elements that make up a piece of writing are taken into consideration. The readers do not count every spelling and grammar mistake, but a paper with many errors may not receive a good score.

Essays must be written "on topic" to receive a score. Pay attention to the topic and to the questions you are asked to answer about the topic. Plan your essay carefully, and allow yourself time to read it and make corrections.

After the readers have scored your paper, their combined score is the total essay score that, together with the score for the multiple-choice section, is the Writing Skills Test composite score.

Sample Topic for the Writing Skills Test, Part Two

It always strikes me as a terrible shame to see young people spending so much of their time staring at television. If we unplugged all the television sets, our children would grow up to be healthier, better educated, and more independent human beings.

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Write a composition of about 200 words presenting your opinion and supporting it with examples from your own experience or your observations of others.

Description and Sample of Essay

The following paper would receive a rating of 3 (highest score is 6) based on the scoring guide. This typical paper has a single purpose or point to make. The supporting ideas are presented in clear sentences so that the reader understands what the writer wants to say. The paper would have been stronger if the writer had given the names of specific television programs that are informational or entertaining. The occasional mistakes in the conventions of standard written English do not interfere with the reader's being able to understand what is written. These mistakes would have been corrected by a stronger writer.

Sample Essay

The question of whether or not television is a positive or negative factor in grow of our children, can have its points both ways. But I feel that the argument, that all the televisions sets should be unplugged, so that our children will grow up to be healthier, better educated, and more independent human beings, is ridiculous there are many informative, and educational and fun things to watch on television.

Television offers educational stations, which have very informative shows and programs, people can learn many things from some of the programs on television. The television is also used to translate news and other information to people, without the news you would not know about the world around you, politics, big events, weather etc. Even the movies and comedies provide entertainment and relaxation, and what better place than in your own home. I agree that some of the television today is none of the above, but the responsibility of what you watch is all up to you. Our children can grow up with television, but adults should help them learn how to choose shows that are going to be good. Television can be a very instrumental thing, it can provide fun and entertainment and also educational shows, that promote learning.

While the person scoring your essay does not count mistakes, these mistakes do influence the reader's overall impression of the writing. For this reason, some of the errors in the sample essay are identified below for you.

The first sentence of the essay is not clear because of the use of grow for growth. The first sentence of any essay is the most important one because it states what the rest of the paper will say. This sentence should be very clear. In the second sentence, there is no reason or rule for the commas after "unplugged" and "beings." If you don't know a rule for the comma, leave it out. Also in the second sentence, the use of "fun things" is too casual or colloquial compared to the rest of the words in the essay. Colloquial expressions may be misunderstood by a reader, so don't use them. The next sentence which starts with "Television offers" is actually two sentences or complete ideas joined together by the comma after "programs." This mistake shows that the writer is not sure about what a sentence really is. Then are other mistakes like these in the rest of the essay.

Everyone makes mistakes when they write quickly. Good writers take the time to go over what is written and correct mistakes. Your writing will show your best skills if you take the time to plan what you say and review it to make any needed corrections.

If you take the Official GED Practice Tests on your own, we recommend that you ask an adult education teacher to help you score your essay. The self-scoring answer sheet for Form CC of the Official GED Practice Tests has an essay scoring guide. See order information on the back page of this Bulletin.

TEST TWO: SOCIAL STUDIES

The GED Social Studies Test contains multiple-choice questions drawn from the following content areas.

- * History
- * Economics
- * Political Science
- * Geography
- * Behavioral Sciences
 - anthropology
 - psychology
 - sociology

(Note that there are different U.S. and Canadian versions of the GED Social Studies Test.)

Most of the questions in the Social Studies Test refer to information provided. The information may be a paragraph, or it may be a chart, table, graph, map, cartoon, or figure. In every case, to answer the questions in the Social Studies Test, you must understand, use, analyze, or evaluate the information provided.

Directions and Sample Questions for Social Studies

Directions: Choose the one best answer to each item.

Items 1 and 2 refer to the following information.

Five amendments to the U.S. Constitution directly affect voting qualifications.

The Fifteenth Amendment, ratified in 1870, prohibited states from using race or color as standards for determining the right to vote.

The Nineteenth Amendment, ratified in 1920, prohibited the states from using gender as a voting qualification.

The Twenty-Third Amendment, ratified in 1961, granted the residents of Washington, D.C., a voice in the selection of the President and Vice President.

The Twenty-Fourth Amendment, ratified in 1964, outlawed the state poll tax as a requirement for voting in national elections.

The Twenty-Sixth Amendment, ratified in 1971, prohibited states from denying the vote to anyone 18 years old or over.

1. The overall effect of the five amendments was to extend the vote to

- (1) a larger portion of U.S. citizens
- (2) a limited number of citizens
- (3) tax-paying citizens
- (4) citizens qualified by race and gender
- (5) those citizens who must pay for the privilege

Correct Answer: 1

Difficulty Level: Easy

To answer question 1 correctly, you must read and understand all of the information provided regarding the five amendments to the U.S. Constitution. Then you must decide which of the options provided best states the overall effect of the amendments.

A careful reading of the amendments should indicate to you

that, in each case, the effect of the amendment was to extend voting rights to more citizens. Option (2) is a correct statement (citizens under 18 are not able to vote), but Option (2) is not the best answer to the question. The best answer is Option (1) which describes the overall effect of the five amendments. The overall effect of these amendments was to provide voting rights to more citizens.

2. Which statement about the five amendments appears to be the best summary?

- (1) They affirm the right of women to vote.
- (2) They limit the right of U.S. citizens to vote according to where they live.
- (3) They prohibit the use of certain requirements as voting qualifications.
- (4) They prohibit some citizens from voting.
- (5) They permit certain qualifications to be used in voting.

Correct Answer: 3

Difficulty Level: Difficult

The key word in question 2 is summary. This is important to recognize, because several of the options present correct and accurate statements, but only one presents the best summary.

Remember that an effective summary statement must provide the main points made by the information. In this case, the summary statement must address all five of the amendments. Only option (3) does this by referring to the prohibition of "certain requirements as voting qualifications."

Item 3 refers to the following information.

3. Which statement is supported by information in the graph?

- (1) Most parents are employed.

- (2) Most parents are satisfied with their child-care arrangements.
- (3) A group center is the most common arrangement used by employed parents.
- (4) Most employed parents arrange for child care either in their own home or in someone else's home.
- (5) About a quarter of all employed parents use child-care facilities at their place of work.

Correct Answer: 4

Difficulty Level: Moderately difficult

About one out of every three or four questions in the Social Studies Test will refer to a map, figure, chart, or graph.

This question requires you to evaluate each of the statements to determine which one can be supported by information in the graph. To do this, you must first understand what information is being provided in the graph.

Finding the correct answer is then a matter of testing each of the statements against the graph to see if it can be supported. In questions like this one, it is most important that you select your answer only on the basis of the information provided, not on the basis of opinions or prior knowledge.

In this case, the statement in option (4) is supported by the fact that the sections of the graph that relate to the child's own home or another home add up to 70.8%, which accounts for most parents.

TEST THREE: SCIENCE

The GED Science Test contains multiple-choice questions drawn from the following content areas:

- * Biology

- * Earth Science

* Physics

* Chemistry

All questions in the Science Test require you to use information provided in the test question or learned through life experience. The information may be a paragraph, or it may be a chart, table, graph, map, or figure. In every case, to answer the questions in the Science Test, you must understand the information provided or use the information to solve a problem or make a judgment.

Directions and Sample Questions for Science

Choose the one best answer to each item.

Item 1 is based on the following figure.

1. A large fiberglass tank was placed in a pit as shown in the diagram above. Before pipes could be attached and the tank filled with gasoline, the workers were asked to move the tank to another location.

Which of the following suggestions would be the best way to raise the tank off the bottom of the pit so cables could be placed under the tank?

- (1) Fill the tank with gasoline.
- (2) Fill the tank with water.
- (3) Fill the pit with water.
- (4) Fill the pit with water and the tank with gasoline.
- (5) Fill both the pit and the tank with water.

Correct Answer: 3

Difficulty Level: Easy

Typical of most questions in the Science Test, this physics question presents a practical problem that must be solved. To answer the question correctly, you must be able to

understand the key features of the figure and understand the physical reaction that will result from each of the proposed solutions.

Option (3) is the best answer because the method it proposes is most likely to cause the tank to float off the bottom of the pit. By filling the pit with water and leaving the tank filled only with air, the tank becomes buoyant and is likely to rise off the bottom of the pit so that cables can be placed under the tank.

2. An electric current releases heat to the wire in which it is traveling.

Which of the following electric appliances would best illustrate an application of the above statement?

- (1) mixer
- (2) clock
- (3) vacuum
- (4) toaster
- (5) fan

Correct Answer: 4
Difficulty Level: Easy

Many of the questions in the Science Test, like this one, provide a scientific principle, followed by a question or problem regarding its application. Only one of the appliances named in the options--the toaster--uses heat produced by the electric current in the wire. In this sense, the toaster best illustrates an application of the principle. All of the appliances named in the other options contain wires which undoubtedly release heat, but the heat is a by-product and not central to the intended purpose of the appliance.

Item 3 refers to the following graph.

3. According to the graph above, which of the following

colors of light is absorbed the least by a plant?

- (1) red
- (2) yellow
- (3) green
- (4) blue
- (5) violet

Correct Answer: 3

Difficulty Level: Difficult

To answer this biology question correctly, you must first read and correctly interpret the graph that is provided. First, note that the question calls for you to identify the color absorbed the least. Next, notice the labels that identify the vertical and horizontal axes of the graph. You must recognize that the label on the vertical axis, "Percentage of Light Absorbed," is a measure of the quantity of light absorbed. Following the line graph to its lowest point, you can see that that point is closest to the label "green" on the horizontal axis.

TEST FOUR: INTERPRETING LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

The GED Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test contains multiple-choice questions drawn from three content areas:

- * Popular Literature
- * Classical Literature
- * Commentary

The questions measure your ability to understand and analyze what you read.

While most literature selections are drawn from American authors, English and Canadian authors are also represented, as are translations of important works from throughout the world. Popular and classical literature selections include fiction,

prose nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Materials in the Commentary section include prose excerpts about literature and the arts.

Directions and Sample Questions for Interpreting Literature and the Arts

Direction: Choose the one best answer to each item.

Items 1 to 3 refer to the following excerpt from an essay.

WHAT WAS THE AMERICAN SMALL TOWN LIKE?

I'm glad I was born soon enough to have seen the American small town, if not at its height, at least in the early days of decline into its present forlorn status as a conduit for cars and people, all headed for some Big City over the horizon. The small town was not always a stultifying trap for bright young people to escape from; in the years before wartime travel ("How're you gonna keep'em down on the farm/After they've seen Paree?") and the scorn of the Menckens and Sinclair Lewises made the cities a magnet for farm boys and girls, the town of five to twenty thousand was a selfsufficient little city-state of its own.

The main street of those Midwestern towns I remember from the thirties varied little from one place to another: there were always a number of brick Victorian buildings, labeled "Richard's Block" or "Denman Block," which housed, downstairs, the chief emporia of the town--the stores which made it a shire town for the surrounding farmlands. Each of these stores was run according to a very exact idea of the rules of its particular game. A hardware store, for instance, had to be densely hung inside with edged tools--scythes, sickles, saws--of all descriptions. It had to smell of oil, like metal, and often like the sacks of fertilizer stacked in the back room. It had to have unstained wood floors, sometimes sprinkled with sawdust, and high cabinets of small drawers containing bolts, screws, nails, and small plumbing accessories. It had to be owned and run by a middle-aged man in a blue apron, assisted by one up-and-coming young man and one part-time boy in his middle teens. It had to sell for cash on the barrelhead, and it did.

The drugstore was a horse of a different color (and

order), but it was circumscribed by equally strict rules. Here you would ask the white-coated and (often rimless-spectacles) druggist for aspirin or Four-Way Cold Tablets or Bromo-Seltzer, or perhaps for paramedical advice, which he was glad to give....

These towns are by and large gone in 1974, their old stores shut up with dusty windows, or combined, two or three at a time, to make a superette, a W.T. Grant store, or a sub-and-pizza parlor. The business has moved to the big shopping center on the Interstate or on to the city over the horizon, and the depopulated old towns drift along toward oblivion, centers of nothing in the middle of nowhere.

From "Int'l Jet Set Hits Watkins Glen" by L.E. Sissman in Selections From 119 Years of the Atlantic. Copyright * 1974. Used by permission.

1. According to the essay, what is the major reason for the decline of the American small town?

- (1) Cars made people more mobile.
- (2) Lack of variation from one town to another drove people away.
- (3) Big cities drew people away from the towns.
- (4) Their main streets were all the same.
- (5) Writers criticized small town life.

Correct Answer: 3

Difficulty Level: Easy

Many of the questions on the Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test are like this one: they require you show that you understand an important idea contained in the selection. The idea may or may not be directly stated in the selection.

The information needed to answer this question is contained mainly in the first paragraph of the selection, where the author comments briefly on what drew people away from the small towns. It is here in the first paragraph that the author refers to the way the cities lured people away from the small towns.

As stated in option (3), big cities drew people away from the towns for many reasons; the way small towns were referred to in writings of the time was only one of the reasons. Option (3) is the best answer because only this answer offers the major reason.

2. How does the author feel about the American small town?

- (1) angry
- (2) nostalgic
- (3) spiteful
- (4) embarrassed
- (5) relieved

Correct Answer: 2

Difficulty Level: Moderately difficult

The writer's attitude toward the subject, or the way he or she feels about it, is another area about which questions are asked in the Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test. Rarely does an author directly state his or her feelings about this subject. Instead, you must detect or infer those feelings from the way the author writes about the subject. Answering questions like this one requires an understanding of the total selection.

The writer's attitude comes through clearly throughout the selection. In stating that he was happy to have seen the small town "at its height," the author is making clear his positive attitude toward the subject. In addition, the use of the term "forlorn" in the first sentence suggests a sadness regarding something wonderful that has passed by. Only option (2), nostalgic, expresses this attitude towards the subject.

3. Given the descriptions of the small town stores, the author would most likely view modern shopping malls as places

- (1) catering to small town people
- (2) taking over the role of small farm stores
- (3) lacking the friendliness of small town stores
- (4) providing variety and sophistication to small town clients
- (5) carrying on the tradition of small town stores

Correct Answer: 3

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Several questions in the Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test ask you to use your understanding of the reading selection to predict how the author or a character will act in a different situation. The detailed descriptions of small town stores provided in the second and third paragraphs of the selection emphasize their neighborliness and emphasis on personal service. Since the author views the decline of the small town as a source of regret, it is most likely that he would view modern shopping malls as places that lack the features that characterize small town stores. Option (3) expresses this idea best.

TEST FIVE: MATHEMATICS

The GED Mathematics Test measures the ability to solve--or find the best method to solve--mathematics problems typical of those studied in high school mathematics courses. Subject matter for the GED Mathematics Test questions is drawn from three areas:

* Arithmetic

measurement
numeration
data analysis

* Algebra

* Geometry

Directions and Sample Questions for Mathematics

Choose the one best answer to each item.

1. If 10% of a town's population of 10,000 people moved away, how many people remained in the town?

- (1) 100
- (2) 900
- (3) 1000
- (4) 9000
- (5) 9900

Correct Answer: 4

Difficulty Level: Moderately Difficult

This is an example of a question involving computations with percentages. Like most of the questions in the Mathematics Test, solving the problem involves more than one step.

Here is one method you could use to solve this problem. First, you must compute 10% of 10,000. You can probably do this mentally; if not, you could divide 10,000 by 10 or multiply 10,000 by .10.

Now you know that 1000 people moved, but notice that the question asks for the number that remained in the town. So, you must subtract 1000 from the total population of 10,000 to find the correct answer of 9000 (option 4).

Item 2 is based on the following graph.

2. The figure above shows how the tax dollar was spent in a given year. According to the figure, what percent of the tax dollar was left after direct payment to individuals and national defense expenses?

- (1) 3%

- (2) 11%
- (3) 33%
- (4) 67%
- (5) 114%

Correct Answer: 3
Difficulty Level: Easy

About one-third of the questions in the Mathematics Test will refer to charts, tables, or graphic materials like this one. This question requires, first, that you understand the information presented in the pie graph and recognize that the five categories of spending described in the graph equal 100%. Next, the phrase "was left" in the question should indicate to you that the problem requires subtraction. The sum of the 42% indicated as "Direct Benefit Payments to Individuals" and the 25% indicated as "National Defense," is 67%. Subtracting 67% from 100% yields a result of 33%. Thus, option (3) is the correct answer.

3. A part-time job pays \$6.75 per hour. Which of the following expressions best represents an employee's total earnings if the employee works 2 hours on Monday, 3 hours on Tuesday, 4 hours on Wednesday, 5 hours on Thursday, and 6 hours on Friday?

- (1) $2+3+4+5+6$
- (2) $10 + 6.75$
- (3) $10(6.75)$
- (4) $20 + 6.75$
- (5) $20(6.75)$

Correct Answer: 5
Difficulty Level: Easy

Some questions in the Mathematics Test, like this one, do not ask for a numerical solution to the problem. Instead, they ask you to select the best method for setting up the problem to arrive at a correct solution.

The first step here is to identify exactly what answer is required. In this case, it is the underlined phrase total earnings. Next, you must understand that total earnings will be the product (multiplication) of the hourly rate of \$6.75 times the number of hours worked.

Understanding how total earnings is computed will make clear to you that the solution to the problem must include the number 6.75 multiplied by some other number. The other number is the sum of $2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6$ (the number of hours worked), or 20. So, option (5) is the correct answer.

Options (1), (2), and (4) do not indicate multiplication as a function, while option (3) uses an incorrect number of hours as a multiplier of the hourly rate.

HOW ARE GED SCORES REPORTED?

Separate scores are reported for each of the five GED Tests. GED Test results are reported on a standard score scale ranging from 20 (lowest possible score) to 80 (highest possible score). Your score on the GED Tests is not the number of correct answers or the percent correct. The Writing Skills Test score is a statistical combination of the number of questions answered correctly on the multiple-choice section with the score on the essay section (see "How the Essay Section Is Scored" on page 6). The score for all other tests in the GED battery is based only on the number of multiple-choice questions answered correctly.

WHAT SCORE DO I NEED TO PASS?

Passing scores for the GED Tests are established by the states, provinces, and territories that administer the GED Testing Program. In general, if you answer 60 percent of the questions correctly on each test, you will earn a passing score. Your local GED Testing Center or adult education program can tell you what the minimum required standard scores are for your area. Most current requirements are set so that GED examinees must earn scores higher than those of about 30

percent of today's high school graduates to earn a GED Diploma.

Though the score requirements vary from one jurisdiction to another, most requirements are stated in terms of a minimum score for each test and/or a minimum average score for all five tests. For example, a common passing standard score required in any state, province, or territory is 35 on any one test and an average of 45 on all five tests. If this were the score requirement in your area, you would need to achieve a standard score of at least 35 on each of the five tests and a total of at least 225 for all five tests to achieve an average of 45.

HOW SHOULD I INTERPRET MY SCORES?

Your GED Test score is an estimate of your knowledge and skills in the areas tested as compared to the knowledge and skills of recent high school graduates. As with any test, the scores are not intended to be a complete and perfect measure of all you know and can do. Rather, the GED Tests provide an estimate of your educational achievements, as compared to those of high school graduates. In fact, if you take a different form of the test covering the same content areas with slightly different questions, it is likely that your score will be slightly different.

If you take the GED Tests and do not achieve the minimum passing score required by your state, province, or territory, contact your local adult education center for assistance in interpreting your scores so that you can improve your performance in the future.

If you are taking the GED Tests for college or university admission, check with the institution you plan to attend to find out the minimum scores required for admission.

WHAT CAN I DO BEFORE TAKING THE TESTS?

Familiarize yourself with the content of the tests. You can do this in two ways. First, review the content descriptions and sample test questions in this Bulletin. The questions included here are typical of the type and difficulty of questions you will find in the actual GED Tests. Second, take the Official GED Practice Tests, either through your local adult education program or by yourself. When you take the Practice Tests, be sure to follow the time limits given in the

directions. In this way, you will be able to get an accurate sense of what taking the actual GED Tests will be like, what the questions will look like, and how much time you'll have to work on the questions. While working on the Official GED Practice Tests, try out some of the strategies suggested in this Bulletin.

- * Spend time reading newspapers and news magazines. Many of the articles in these publications are similar to those used in the GED Tests.

- * Don't worry too much. A little test anxiety is normal and may be a good thing, because it makes you more alert and motivates you to do your best. To keep anxiety from getting out of hand:

- Become familiar with the content of the tests.

- Prepare for the tests as fully as you can. When you have done all you can, relax; if you have prepared well, you will do well.

- Remember that there are no "trick" questions on the tests so you don't have to worry about being "fooled" by the questions.

- Remember that you don't have to answer every question correctly to pass.

- * Come to the testing session physically and mentally alert. The GED Tests are designed to measure skills acquired over a long period of time. "Cramming" the night before will probably not help.

WHAT CAN I DO WHILE TAKING THE TESTS?

Try using some of the following strategies to help you do your best while you are taking the GED Tests.

Test-Taking Strategies

- * Answer every question. Scores are based only on the number of questions answered correctly; there is no penalty for guessing.

- * Read the test directions carefully for each section of the test.
- * Be sure you know what the question asks for before selecting an answer. Pay particular attention to any portions of the question that may be underlined or printed in capital letters.
- * Briefly scan the text or figure that accompanies the question; then read the questions and options to see what information you will need. Next, return to the text or figure for a more careful reading.
- * Draw figures or charts--or list key facts--on scratch paper.
- * Use your time wisely. Budget your time so that you are able to finish the test within the time permitted. Skip difficult questions and return to them near the end of the testing period.
- * Remember that you are looking for the one best answer.
- * For the Essay Section of the Writing Skills Test:
 - Organize your essay as a direct answer to the topic assigned. Your essay should state your answer and then explain why you answered the way you did.
 - Be sure your explanation supports your answer. For example, if you were writing on the topic on page 6 in this Bulletin and your essay included the statement that too much television is bad for children, you should provide reasons and examples that show how television harms children.
 - Use details and examples that show the reader what, why, and how. The more convincing your essay is, the more effective it is. Whatever the specific subject of the essay question may be, think of your essay as an attempt to convince the reader of the correctness of your answer.
- * For the Mathematics Test:
 - Look over the answer choices before beginning to figure out the answer. See how exact you need to be. For example, instead of an answer carried to three decimal places, the options may simply present whole numbers.

This will save you time in arriving at a solution.

- Check your answer to see if it "makes sense" in the context of the problem. For example, if your computation indicates that a one-pound bag of carrots will cost \$25, you should recognize that you've made an error because the figure of \$25 for a bag of carrots does not make sense.
- Use the formulas page provided in the front of the Mathematics Test. You will need to determine which, if any, of the formulas to use to solve a problem, but you do not have to memorize the formulas.
- Use your personal experience to help solve the problems. The settings used for the problems in the Mathematics Test are usually realistic. For example, in a problem that requires you to compute weekly earnings, ask yourself, "how would I figure my weekly earnings?"

WHERE TO CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION

UNITED STATES

Alabama

(800) 392-8086 or (205) 242-8182

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(907) 465-4685

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(800) 352-4558

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