GED Knowledge & Skill Gaps

Reasoning Through Language Arts Session 2

A Tuesdays for Teachers Webinar

by the GED Testing Service®

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Welcome

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Looking at the Big Picture

- Reasoning through Language Arts (RLA) content areas:

  - Language – Session 1 (editing passages & writing trait 3)

  - Reading – Session 2

  - Writing – Session 3 (writing traits 1 & 2)

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Today's Focus

➢ What is a skills gap?

➢ How gaps are identified

➢ Possible reasons for gaps

➢ Targets and Indicators

➢ Specific examples – reading items

➢ Strategies to close the gaps

➢ Resources

➢ Q&A

What is a gap?

A gap is the differences between the **expected** performance and the **actual** performance.

- Gaps range from foundational skills to more complex skills.

- Clarification and practice could help students improve their overall performance.

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How the gaps were identified

Develop Items & Psgs

Write
Review/Edit
Committee Review
Review/Edit
Expert Review

Field Test & Analyze

Construct
Review
Embed/Test
→ **Analyze data**
Add to bank

Build/Publish Tests

Construct
Translate
Review
Publish
Research

Possible reasons for gaps

- The students may need to improve their **critical thinking**, writing, and/or **reading skills**.

- The students may have specific gaps that need more coverage during GED® test preparation.

- Students tend to perform less well on certain items simply because the concepts are difficult.

Targets and Indicators

- GED® Assessment Guide for Educators
  - https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/assessment_guide_for_educators_all_subjects.pdf
  - RLA begins on page 73; Targets and Indicators begin page 78.
  - Emphasis on critical thinking, argumentation, authentic tasks, and real-world skills.

- Reasoning through Language Arts (RLA) content areas:
  - Reading
  - Language
  - Writing

- Free Practice Test online
  - https://ged.com/practice-test/en/rla/start.html

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GED® Reading Items & Passages

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Reading Items and Stimuli

- RLA = Reasoning Through Language Arts.
  - Heavy emphasis on reasoning (argumentation, evidence, close analysis of textual details)

- The RLA Test includes literary and informative texts.
  - 1/3 Literary (fiction, memoirs, excerpts)
  - 2/3 Informative (articles, blog posts, newspaper columns, any kind of real-world persuasive text)

- Each text has a set of items. Two main item types:
  - Multiple choice
  - Drag and drop

- All RLA Reading items are text-based.

Reading Skills Gaps: Overarching Skills

	Overarching RLA Skills Gaps
Gap 1	Close Reading of the Text
Gap 2	Consider the WHOLE Context of the Text
Gap 3	Think about the Author (Integral to Passage Context)

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Reading Overarching Skills Gap Explained

Gap 1	Close Reading of the Text

Key Ideas

- **Read closely.**
- **Go back to the text to find details or components of an argument. Re-read the relevant sections.**
- **Do not just "match words" between the item and the text; instead, interpret the text. (Most reading items require more than basic recall, and no RLA items are deliberately written to test literal word matching.)**

Common Mistakes

- Word matching: Picking an option because it uses a key word in the passage, without thinking through if it is a good answer
- Not seeing the building blocks of the author's argument
- Ignoring the details of the text

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Reading Overarching Skills Gap Explained

Gap 2	**Consider the WHOLE Context of the Text**

Key Ideas
- **All items relate to the text as a whole; an individual item will not contradict the meaning of the larger text.**
  - An answer about paragraph 5 should not contradict something in paragraph 1. All the writer's ideas are interconnected and building on each other.
- **If a sentence is quoted in an item stem, consider the role of the sentence within the whole text. (It does not exist in isolation.) The overall meaning of the whole text could influence which answer is correct.**
- **Incorrect options will seem plausible, but they will not fit the overall meaning of the WHOLE text (when evaluated closely).**

Common Mistakes
- Choosing an answer that sounds true (plausible) but contradicts the views or overall message of THIS text.

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Reading Overarching Skills Gap Explained

Gap 3	Think about the Author (Integral to Passage Context)

Key Ideas
- **What is the author's role?**
- **How does that role influence what the author writes/says?**
- **What biases or assumptions might the author have or make? An item's correct response CANNOT contradict the perspective or agenda of the author.**

Common Mistakes
- Choosing an answer that sounds true but contradicts the views or perspective of the author of THIS text (as presented in the text).
- Choosing an incorrect option that is an opinion, but it is not THIS author's opinion (or is not supported based on the author's claim and line of reasoning).

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Reading Skills Gaps: Indicators (1st group)

Code	Target or Indicator
R.3.1	Students will order sequences of events in texts.
R.5.1	Students will analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.
R.9.2	Students will compare two passages in similar or closely related genre that share ideas or themes, focusing on similarities and/or differences in perspective, tone, style, structure, purpose, or overall impact.
R.9.3	Students will compare two argumentative passages on the same topic that present opposing claims […] and <u>analyze how each text emphasizes different evidence or advances a different interpretations of facts</u>.

R.3.1 Skills Gap Explained

R.3.1	Students will order sequences of events in texts.

What does this indicator measure?
- Comprehension of the text
- Attention to details in the text [Close reading]

The Gap

- **Straightforward skill, but reading the text IS required. The location of a detail in the text is not always the same as when it occurred (memories, flashbacks, etc). Pay attention to details. Comprehend the text.**
- **Students need to read and comprehend the text. Go back to the text to find the order of events.**

Special considerations
- 4 or 5 events per item
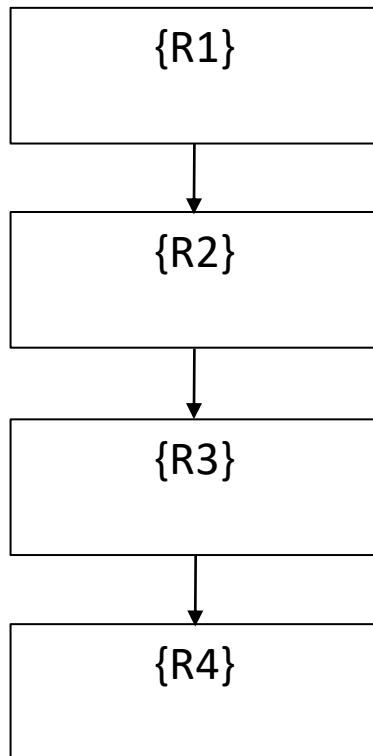- Drag and drop items are most common for R.3.1.

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R.3.1 Example

R.3.1	Students will order sequences of events in texts.

Drag the events to the chart to show the order they appear in the excerpt.

{R1}

↓

{R2}

↓

{R3}

↓

{R4}

Possible Events

Dragger A – Event from the text

Dragger B – Event from the text

Dragger C – Event from the text

Dragger D – Event from the text

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R.5.1 Skills Gap Explained

R.5.1	Students will analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

What does this indicator measure?
- How parts of the text fit into the greater whole
- How ideas develop throughout a text; how the author builds an argument or message

The Gap
- **Students need to consider the whole text context and closely analyze the details.**

Special considerations
- Most often measured with informative texts

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R.5.1 Examples

R.5.1	Students will analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

How does paragraph 3 fit into the problem-solution structure of the article as it relates to the idea that _____?

How does paragraph # fit into the argumentative structure of the editorial?

R.9.2 Skills Gap Explained

R.9.2	Students will **compare two passages** in similar or closely related genre that share ideas or themes, focusing on **similarities and/or differences in perspective, tone, style, structure, purpose, or overall impact**.

What does this indicator measure?
- Comparing texts
- Re-reading texts to analyze perspective, tone, style, structure, purpose, impact

The Gap
- **Students need to read both texts closely.**
- **Students need to re-read the texts to locate key details or evidence.**

Special considerations
- Only measured with paired informative texts

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R.9.2 Examples

R.9.2	Students will compare two passages in similar or closely related genre that share ideas or themes, focusing on similarities and/or differences in perspective, tone, style, structure, purpose, or overall impact.

How is the tone of Smith's TEXT similar to that of Chan's TEXT?

How is the overall impact of Smith's TEXT different than that of Chan's TEXT?

How is the structure of Smith's TEXT similar to that of Chan's TEXT?

[Drag and drop] Compare the perspectives of the two articles. For each perspective in the chart, drag the label "Smith," "Chan," or "Both Authors" to show which authors demonstrate each perspective.

R.9.3 Skills Gap Explained

R.9.3	Students will compare two argumentative passages on the same topic that present opposing claims […] and **analyze how each text emphasizes different evidence or advances a different interpretations of facts**.

What does this indicator measure?
- Critical thinking
- Analyzing how authors use evidence to serve their agenda
- Analyzing how two authors could use the same fact differently

The Gap
- **Students need to look closely at how each author is using the information differently to serve their overall purpose. Multilayered skills: critical thinking.**

Special considerations
- Only measured with paired informative texts

R.9.3 Example

R.9.3	Students will compare two argumentative passages on the same topic that present opposing claims […] and <u>analyze how each text emphasizes different evidence or advances a different interpretations of facts</u>.

Text 1: A historian references a fact that 100,000 people attended a march for a particular cause. The historian emphasizes that the 100,000 people is a large number.

Text 2: A different historian also writes about the march but emphasizes that the 100,000 people is fewer than attended the march in previous years.

How do the historians use the number of people attending the march differently?
**One uses it to suggest significant support for the cause, whereas the other uses it to imply that support for the cause is decreasing over time.

Reading Skills Gaps: Indicators (R8 group)

Code	Target or Indicator
R8	**[Target]** Students will delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. • *Know the difference between claims, reasoning, and evidence. All R8s require close reading, genuine understanding, analysis.*
R.8.1	Students will delineate the specific steps of an argument the author puts forward, including how the argument's claims build on one another. • *Difficult skill, but important. Understand the argument in the passage; see the "building blocks" the writer is using to create the argument.*
R.8.2	Students will identify specific pieces of evidence an author uses in support of claims or conclusions. • *Evaluate if the detail is really evidence for the claim. Evidence is not always next to the claim.*

Continued on the next slide...

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Reading Skills Gaps: Indicators (R8 group)

Code	Target or Indicator
R.8.3	Students will evaluate the relevance and sufficiency of evidence offered in support of a claim. • *Look closely at the analysis given in each option: Is it an accurate analysis? Don't stop at the "Yes" or "No" choice.*
R.8.4	Students will distinguish claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. • *Look for clear support for the claim: an explanation that's at least a sentence long, a piece of evidence or data, etc.*
R.8.5	Students will assess whether the reasoning is valid; identify fallacious reasoning in an argument and evaluate its impact. • *Select a complete answer. A data review note from an item: "B is the best answer. Option A mentions the claim, but a claim alone is not valid reasoning, whereas option B includes the explanation around the claim." This points to students needing to analyze each option closely.*

R.8.1 Examples

R.8.1	Students will delineate the specific steps of an argument the author puts forward, including how the argument's claims build on one another.

Each option shows two claims and a conclusion from the article. Which option shows claims that build on each other to arrive at the given conclusion?
- *Four options each list 2 claims and one conclusion.*

Which premise does the author rely on to support the argument that ____?

Why does the article cite the examples in paragraphs 2–5 out of chronological order?

Which part of the argument occurs in paragraphs #–#?

Drag three claims into the chart to show how the author builds the argument about _____. [Drag-and-drop item]

R.8.2 Examples

R.8.2	Students will identify specific pieces of evidence an author uses in support of claims or conclusions.

What piece of evidence does Chan offer in her article to support the idea that _____?

Which piece of evidence from the blog post supports the CONCLUSION/CLAIM that _____?

What evidence do the authors provide to support the claim that _____?

R.8.3 Examples

R.8.3	Students will evaluate the relevance and sufficiency of evidence offered in support of a claim.

In paragraph 3, the author claims that _____. Is this claim well supported?

a. Yes, because the author provides data….

b. Yes, because the author shows a correlation between….

c. No, because the author cites...

d. No, because the author describes...

[Drag-and-drop item] Which evidence in paragraphs 4–6 is relevant support for the claim that XYZ? For each piece of evidence in the chart, drag the label "Relevant" or "Irrelevant."

Evidence	Relevant or Irrelevant?
<Evidence from the text>	
<Evidence from the text>	
<Evidence from the text>	

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R.8.4 Examples

R.8.4	Students will distinguish claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

Which claim made by the author is unsupported by reasons and evidence in the article?

Which claim in the speech is supported with logical reasoning?

[Drag-and-drop item] Which claims made in Oniskawa's article are supported by reasons or evidence? Drag a "Supported" or "Unsupported" label to each claim in the chart.

Claim	Supported or Unsupported?
<Claim from the text>	
<Claim from the text>	
<Claim from the text>	

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R.8.5 Examples

R.8.5	Students will assess whether the reasoning is valid; identify fallacious reasoning in an argument and evaluate its impact.

Which paragraph contains flawed reasoning?

Why is the reasoning in paragraph # flawed?

Which weakness in reasoning is evident in paragraph #?

Do the authors offer valid reasoning in paragraph 2?

Which explanation accurately characterizes the flawed reasoning in Gonzales's letter?

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Reading Strategies

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Reading Strategies

Close Readers	Not-So-Close Readers
Reread	Read the text once
Focus on the text	Let their thinking wander
Ask questions	Take the text at face value
Pay attention to language	Ignore syntax clues
Uncover deeper meaning	Understand only at surface level

Claims Here – Claims Everywhere!

Getting to the Facts

Claim	Evidence	Reasoning
• The idea the author is presenting to you.	• The information provided to you in support of the claim. • How do you know this is accurate?	• The information that explains <u>why</u> the evidence supports the claim. • What links the evidence to the claim? Is it valid?

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Elements that Shape the Text

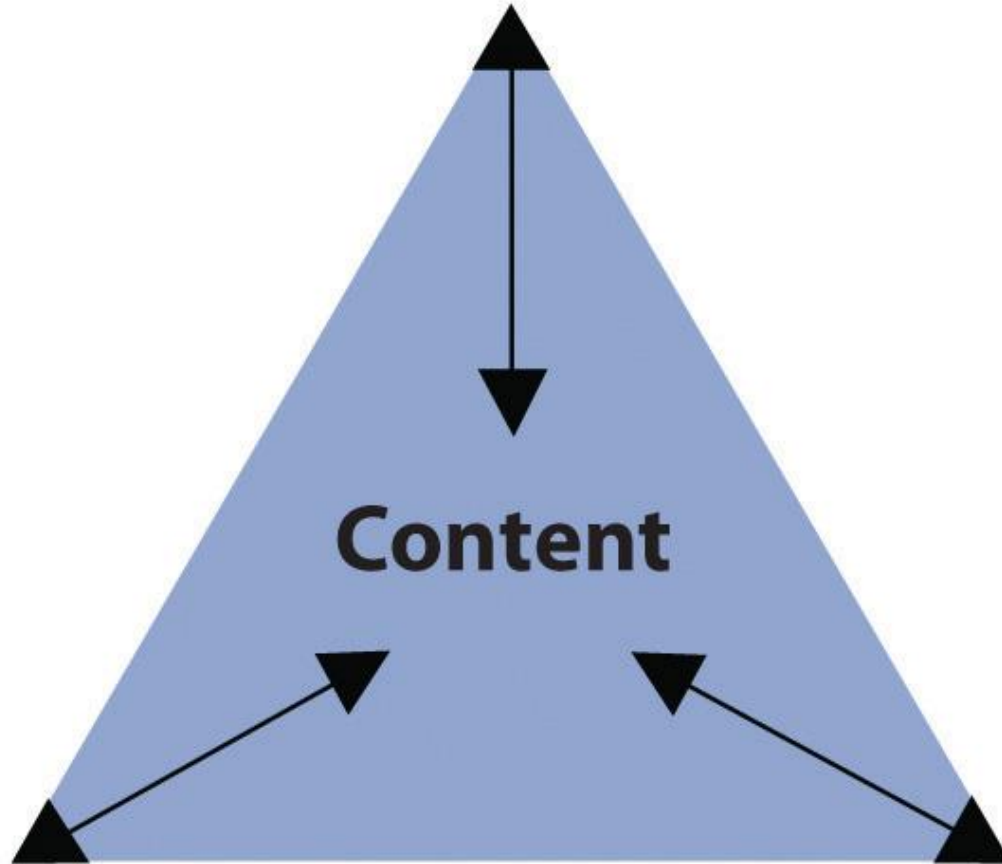| Purpose	Audience	Tone
The reason the author writes about a topic What is the author trying to communicate to the audience?	The individual or group the writer intends to address How will the audience receive your message?	The attitude the writer conveys What will the audience feel? How will they respond to what they have read?

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What's the Author's Purpose?

- **Persuade** or inspire someone to act or to think about an issue from your point of view.
- **Challenge** someone or make them question their thinking or behavior.
- **Argue** for or against something others believe or do; change their minds or behavior.
- **Inform** or teach others about a topic they don't know much about.
- **Connect** with others emotionally; help them feel understood.
- **Entertain** others through stories, jokes, or cartoons

R.9.2 Reading Strategies

An article emphasizes the importance of using more sustainable materials and less plastic in order to protect the environment.

What's the author's purpose?

A speech by a candidate running for the U.S. Senate focuses on the need for volunteers and more donations to help him win the upcoming election.

What's the author's purpose?

You just read a book about a young boy with superpowers.

What's the author's purpose?

One Topic – Three Purposes

Persuade

Inform

Entertain

Reading Strategies

Use Tone Words

Sentimental, Emotional

Tolerant, Open-Minded,

Bitter, Resentful

Optimistic, Hopeful

Humorous, Funny

Objective, Factual

Malicious, Harmful, Spiteful

Nostalgic, Wistful, Regretful

Practice Identifying Tone

- It may look sad and shabby, but it was my first real home and has a special place in my heart.
- If I had a better job, I could move out of this dump.
- Well, the paint is peeling and the carpet smells, but we can make some repairs after we sign the lease.
- It's a place to live. It has all the basics. What more do you want?

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ARMED for Reading Items

A nalyze the question(s)

R ead the text

M ake notes and highlight clues

E liminate choices

D ouble check every answer

Reading Item Strategies

Strategies:

- Re-read the text. Think about the WHOLE text.

- Do not rush. Instead, take a breath and focus.

- Use highlighter tool to mark key parts in the text (which makes the passage less daunting).

General Strategies

- Share the GED® indicators and content topics with your students. The content topics can be used as a teaching/study guide.

- Review key foundational concepts/content.

- Remind students to carefully read the questions and excerpts.

- Encourage students to study key definitions and terms.

- Encourage students to read more. Strong reading skills will benefit students in all 4 subject area tests.

- Encourage students to analyze the content they read on a daily basis. Strong critical thinking skills will benefit students in all 4 subject area tests.

More to come in May – Extended Response

Reading skills are also part of the GED® Extended Response writing task.

- Students will read two passages and then understand their arguments well enough to write an analytical response.
  - Reading comprehension
  - Analyzing and evaluating the texts
  - Synthesizing information across two texts

The "GED Knowledge and Skills Gap" presentation for RLA Session 3 will address the GED® Extended Response writing task.

Tuesdays for Teachers
12:30-2:00 PDT/3:30-5:00 EDT

May 24, 2022	Reasoning Through Language Arts, Part Three: Writing (traits 1 & 2)
June 28, 2022	Science

Thank you!

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