GED Knowledge & Skill Gaps
Reasoning Through Language Arts Session 1

A Tuesdays for Teachers Webinar
by the GED Testing Service®
March 22, 2022

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Before We Get Started

During the webinar, **please:**

1. Keep your sound and video **muted**. This will limit background noise.

2. Ask questions using the **chat function**.

3. Keep in mind that the session is being **recorded** for future viewing.

Welcome

Debi Faucette

Cheryl Klar-Trim, GEDTS Manager of Test Development

Amy Hathorn, GEDTS Senior Content Specialist

Susan Pittman, Education Consultant

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Looking at the Big Picture

➢ Three components
  ➢ Language
  ➢ Reading
  ➢ Writing

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

March 22, 2022	Reasoning Through Language Arts, Part One: Language
April 26, 2022	Reasoning Through Language Arts, Part Two: Reading
May 24, 2022	Reasoning Through Language Arts, Part Three: Writing
June 28, 2022	Science

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Today's Focus

➢ What is a skills gap?

➢ How the gaps are identified

➢ Possible reasons for the gaps

➢ Targets and indicators

➢ Specific examples – language items & writing trait 3

➢ Strategies to close the gaps

➢ Resources

➢ Q&A

What is a skills gap?

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

- Gaps range from foundational skills to more complex skills.

- Guidance and practice on these skills could help students improve their overall performance.

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How the gaps were identified

| Develop Items & Psgs	Field Test & Analyze	Build/Publish Tests
Write	Construct	Construct
Review/Edit	Review	Translate
Committee Review	Embed/Test	Review
Review/Edit	Analyze data	Publish
Expert Review	Add to bank	Research

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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

GED® Language Items

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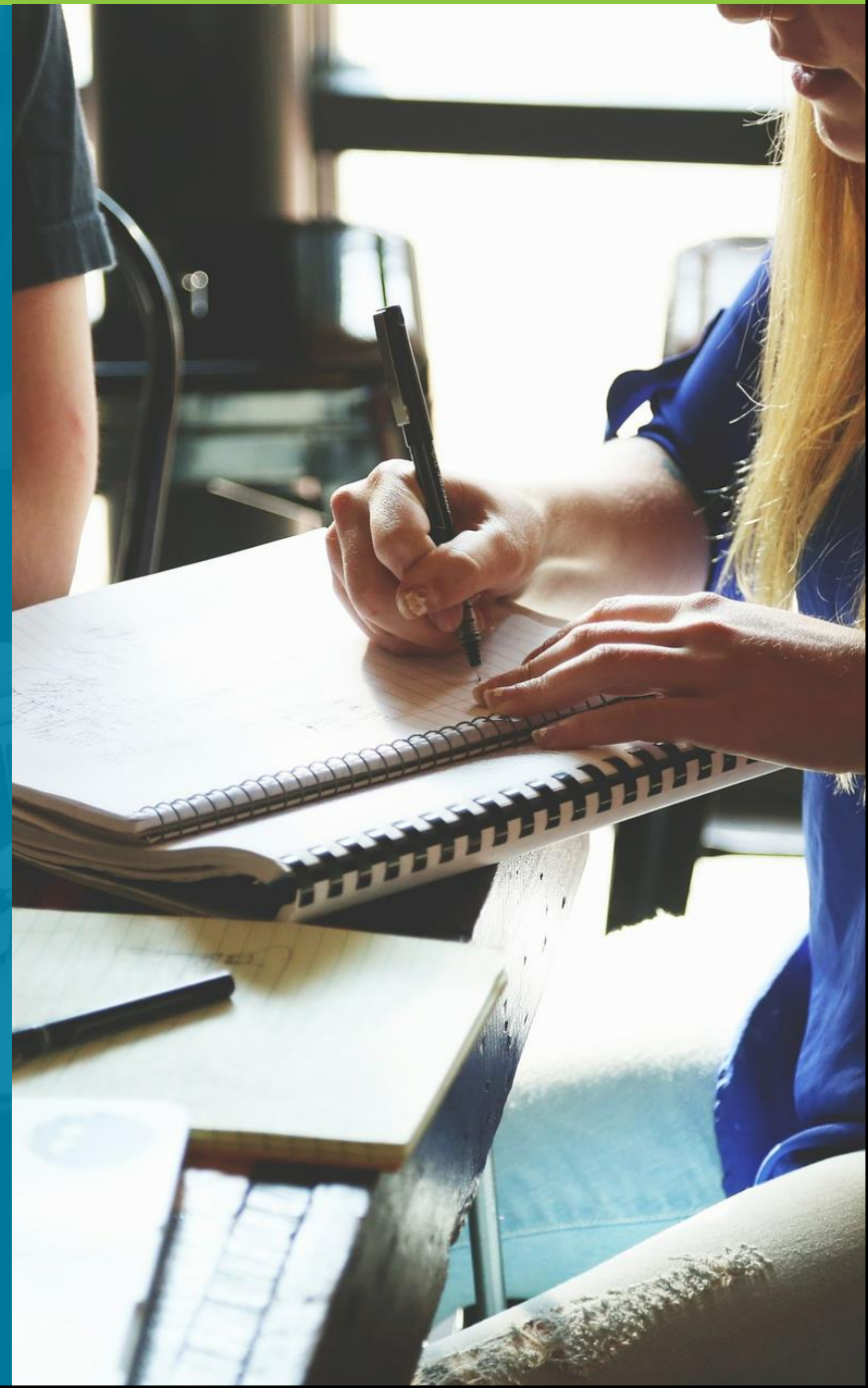
Language Task Example

☑ Answer Explanation   ⚐ Flag for Review

The passage below is incomplete. Navigate to each "Select..." button and choose the option that correctly completes the sentence using **formal standard English**.

Ellen Gardner, CEO
Skyview PC, Inc.
888 Pyle Rd.
San Marte, CA 94656

Dear Ms. Gardner:

My wife and I have been loyal owners of Skyview computers for over 10 years. We are currently on our third Skyview laptop computer, which we purchased three months ago. We appreciate your competitive prices that allow us to upgrade every few years. Also, we have always been delighted with the compatibility of Skyview products with software we use for our home-based business. The speed and power of our Skyview products have been

[outstanding. Your products are always well-suited to our needs. ▼] Just last week, however, our new laptop began to freeze
  Select...   lp desk and received advice from five different advisors.
  outstanding your products are always well-suited to our needs.   es to freeze.
  outstanding. Your products are always well-suited to our needs.
  outstanding, they are always well-suited to our needs.   s in our serial number range have a history of
  outstanding. Always well-suited to our needs.   vith whom my wife spoke acknowledged this
     he but never mentioned that there is an ongoing
problem which needs to be resolved.

I called Skyview again this morning.
[Select... ▼] The representative with whom I eventually spoke directed me to take our laptop to a repair facility 30 miles from our home. I mentioned the information I had learned, and was told that there is a shortage of the parts necessary for repair. Because of this shortage, he said the repair could take up to two months. This is not acceptable. My wife and I conduct business from home and need daily access to our computer.

We believe it is unreasonable for Skyview to ask us to transport our computer at our expense for repairs

← Previous   Next →

From https://ged.com/practice-test/en/rla/start.html

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Language Items and Stimuli

- The text simulates a passage that needs editing. It has 4-5 dropdown items where the students select the options that reflect formal standard English.

- Each dropdown item tests 1 of 13 indicators.
  - Skills: punctuation, wordiness, usage, capitalization, homonyms, formal word choice

- **Directions line (above every language passage):**
  The passage below is incomplete. Navigate to each "Select…" button and choose the option that correctly completes the sentence using **formal standard English**.

Language Skills Gaps

Code	Indicator
L.2.3**	Students will edit to ensure correct use of apostrophes with possessive nouns.
L.1.1	Students will edit to correct errors involving frequently confused words and homonyms, including contractions (passed, past; two, too, to; there, their, they're; knew, new; it's, its).
L.1.7	Students will edit to correct errors in subject-verb or pronoun antecedent agreement in more complicated situations (e.g., with compound subjects, interceding phrases, or collective nouns).
L.1.8	Students will edit to eliminate wordiness or awkward sentence construction.
L.2.2	Students will edit to eliminate run-on sentences, fused sentences, or sentence fragments.

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L.2.3 Skills Gap Explained

L.2.3**	Students will edit to ensure correct use of apostrophes with possessive nouns.

What does this indicator measure?
- Students will select the option that correctly use apostrophes to indicate possession.

The Gap
- **<u>Many</u> students incorrectly use apostrophes (including students who score high on the test overall).**
- **Many students select options without apostrophes (e.g., "dogs bowl," not "dog's bowl").**

Special considerations
- Auto-correct features on cell phones may be reinforcing incorrect apostrophe usage.
- The indicator addresses possessive nouns, not non-possessive plural nouns (that would NOT require an apostrophe).

L.2.3 Example

L.2.3**	Students will edit to ensure correct use of apostrophes with possessive nouns.

For years, the family had one cat and two dogs. The _____ _____ bowls, so the cat did not get to her food in time.

Select...

cat's food bowl was moved too close to the dogs' [Correct]

cats food bowl was moved too close to the dogs

cats' food bowl was moved too close to the dogs's

cats's food bowl was moved too close to the dog's

L.2.3 Strategies

Emphasize Importance of Proofreading

- Improve the quality of the writing.
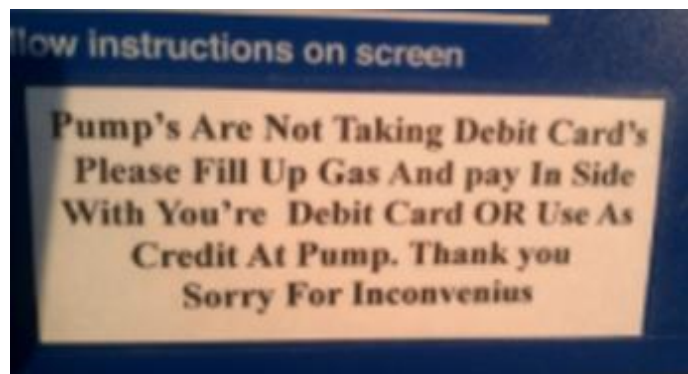- Ensure there are no mistakes.
- Correct errors.

Remember to

- Leave enough time to proofread.
- Have a mental list of areas that often prove problematic.

L.2.3 Strategies

Why are apostrophes such a problem?

Conduct daily "Fix that Sentence" activity!

low instructions on screen

Pump's Are Not Taking Debit Card's
Please Fill Up Gas And pay In Side
With You're Debit Card OR Use As
Credit At Pump. Thank you
Sorry For Inconvenius

Marys sons thought that the resulting assets from the merger of the two companies resources were theirs' to invest.

Review the use of apostrophes
1. Form possessives of nouns
2. Show the omission of letters
3. Indicate the plurals of certain lowercase letters

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L.1.1 Skills Gap Explained

L.1.1	Students will edit to correct errors involving frequently confused words and homonyms, including contractions (passed, past; two, too, to; there, their, they're; knew, new; it's, its).

What does this indicator measure?
- Students will select the option that uses the correct spelling of a word, even though it sounds similar to another common word.

The Gap
- **Some students confuse words that sound the same but are spelled as different words.**
- **Some students mistake "there/their/they're, "too/to," and "your/you're."**

Special considerations
- Homophone – Words that sound the same but have different meanings and different spellings
- Lists of frequently confused words and homophones can be found online

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L.1.1 Examples

L.1.1	Students will edit to correct errors involving frequently confused words and homonyms, including contractions (passed, past; two, too, to; there, their, they're; knew, new; it's, its).

I can <u>accept</u> reality <u>whether</u> they want me to or not.
    NOT: I can <u>except</u> reality <u>weather</u> they want me to or not.

We <u>passed</u> the point of needing to know <u>their</u> plans for the event.
    NOT: We <u>past</u> the point of needing to know <u>there</u> plans for the event.

As the professor explained the topics covered in the <u>course</u>, the loud noise outside made it difficult to <u>hear</u> her.
    NOT: As the professor explained the topics covered in the <u>coarse</u>, the loud noise outside made it difficult to <u>here</u> her.

L.1.1 Strategies

It's the problem with its.

It's not that difficult when you know how and when to use it's.

You just must put its in its place!

Finally, its' is never correct.

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L.1.7 Skills Gap Explained

L.1.7	Students will edit to correct errors in subject-verb or pronoun antecedent agreement in more complicated situations (e.g., with compound subjects, interceding phrases, or collective nouns).

What does this indicator measure?
- Students will select the option that uses the correct verb form for a subject.
- OR: Students will select the option that uses the correct pronoun for the subject.

The Gap
- **Some students do not choose the correct subject. They need to recognize complex sentence structures (where the subject is not next to the verb).**

Special considerations
- The subject will be separated from the verb or pronoun, so students will need to read the full context carefully.
- Students need to choose verb forms that reflect **formal standard English**.

L.1.7 Example

L.1.7	Students will edit to correct errors in subject-verb or pronoun antecedent agreement in more complicated situations (e.g., with compound subjects, interceding phrases, or collective nouns).

The manager **of our warehouse, who joined our company last summer, _____ that we continue to see fewer accidents.**

Select...
thank the entire staff for supporting the new safety policies and report
thank the entire staff for supporting the new safety policies and reports
thanks the entire staff for supporting the new safety policies and report
thanks the entire staff for supporting the new safety policies and reports [Correct]

Subject: The manager

L.1.7 Strategies

My cat is sleeping by the fireplace.   My cats are sleeping by the fireplace.

It's so easy. One cat = singular verb. Two cats = plural verb.

Except for those pesky complicated situations!

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S-V Agreement in Complicated Situations

Compound Subjects

- Mary and I walk every day.
- Peanut butter and jelly is my favorite sandwich. **(intended sense of singular)**
- Potatoes, pasta, or rice goes well with grilled chicken **(verb agrees with the last noun)**

Interceding Phrases

- The teacher of social studies and science is here.
- The house at the end of the block is for sale.
- The arrival of the new costumes has caused excitement among the cast members.

Collective Nouns

- The football team is practicing night and day for the playoffs.
- The school's budget committee disagrees about what to reduce to revenue shortfalls.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

Pronoun – a word that takes the place of a noun

Antecedent – a word for which a pronoun stands

Antecedent

Pronoun/Referent

President Lincoln delivered *his* Gettysburg Address in 1863.

The **can** of lima beans sits on **its** shelf.

singular   prepositional phrase   singular

Each of the clerks does a good deal of work around **his or her** office.

singular   singular

A number of volunteers are offering **their** help.

plural   plural

Visit Towson University Online Writing Support for more examples:
https://webapps.towson.edu/ows/pro_antagree.htm

L.1.8 Skills Gap Explained

L.1.8	Students will edit to eliminate wordiness or awkward sentence construction.

What does this indicator measure?
- Students will select the option that lacks wordiness or awkward sentence construction.

The Gap
- **Some students are drawn to wordy options that emphasize and repeat.**

Special considerations
- Wordiness means "too many words." It could include redundancies (more than one word or phrase that says the same thing, with no added effect). (Wordiness is one type of awkwardness.)
- Wordiness errors will be CLEARLY incorrect (not preferential or style-based).
- Awkward construction could also have incorrect word choice or unclear/incorrect sentence structure.

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L.1.8 Example

L.1.8	Students will edit to eliminate wordiness or awkward sentence construction.

Select...
The warehouse manager, who joined our company last summer, thanks the staff for supporting the new safety policies and reports that we continue to see fewer accidents. [Correct: Not Wordy]

The manager of our warehouse, who joined our company last summer *and started managing the warehouse at that time*, thanks the entire staff for supporting the new safety policies that continue to decrease the number of accidents. [Wordy]

The warehouse manager joined our company last summer, and now she thanks the staff enthusiastically for supporting the new safety policies *that she started* and for leading us *to a time when* we can thankfully report having fewer accidents. [Wordy]

The warehouse manager, who joined our company last summer *and has worked with us since then*, thanks the staff for supporting the new safety policies that are leading to fewer accidents. [Wordy]

L.1.8 Strategies

Steps to Avoid Wordiness

1. Avoid using phrases such as "it is," "there is" and "there are" at the beginning of a sentence.
   > *It is expensive to upgrade a computer.*
   > *Upgrading computers is expensive.*

2. Replace passive verbs with active verbs.
   > *Rain forests are being destroyed by uncontrolled logging.*
   > *Uncontrolled logging is destroying rain forests.*

3. Use strong verbs.
   > *The committee could see several solutions to the budget problems.*
   > *The committee saw several solutions to the budget problems.*

4. Use one-word modifiers rather than prepositional phrases.
   > *The President of the Student Senate was in charge of lobbying against the merger.*
   > *The Student Senate President oversaw lobbying against the merger.*

5. Combine two closely related short sentence by omitting part of one.
   > *The show's director is concerned about problems. Typical problems may occur with lighting, sound, costumes, and props.*
   > *The show's director is concerned about typical problems with lighting, sound, costumes, and props.*

L.2.2 Skills Gap Explained

L.2.2	Students will edit to eliminate run-on sentences, fused sentences, or sentence fragments.

What does this indicator measure?
- Students will select the option that correctly creates complete sentences.

The Gap
- **Some students mistake a comma as a way to join two sentences (fused sentence; comma splice).**
- **Some students mistake the sentence fragment as correct.**

Special considerations
- Each item will have one wrong option for each mistake listed in the L.2.2 indicator:
  - One run-on sentence
  - One fused sentence (comma splice; use of a comma to join two separate sentences)
  - One sentence fragment
- Most students recognize the run-on sentence option as an error.

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L.2.2 Example

L.2.2	Students will edit to eliminate run-on sentences, fused sentences, or sentence fragments.

The warehouse manager joined our company last summer and instituted new safety _____ that we continue to see fewer accidents.

Select...

policies. She thanks the entire staff for supporting these policies and reports [Correct]

policies, she thanks the entire staff for supporting these policies and reports [Fused sentence]

policies. She thanks the entire staff for supporting these policies. Reports [Fragment]

policies and she thanks the entire staff for supporting these policies and reports [Run-on sentence]

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L.2.2 Strategies

Compound Confusion

What do run-ons, comma splices, and fused sentences have in common?

They are all names given to compound sentences that are not punctuated correctly.

If I seem a little crazy, angry, and grouchy right now, it is, I think, because Emily, my coworker, who sits at the next cash register, keeps singing that song from the cartoon where the chicken keeps exploding, and the little boy tries to make the chicken angry, and I think I'm going to explode if I hear that song one more time.

Run-on sentence sample retrieved from
https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/grammar/runon-sentences/1/
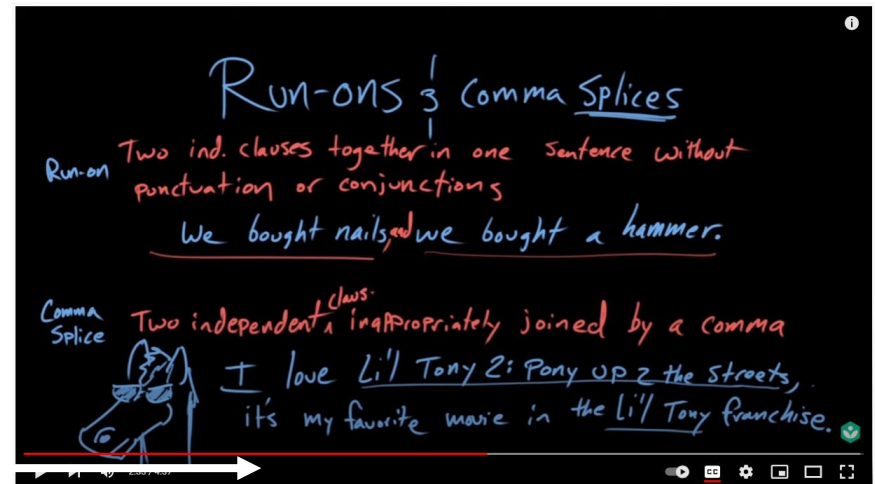
Developed by Khan Academy:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fh45mhVsZrU

L.2.2 Strategies

Check for Sentence Fragments!

1. Does it have a subject?
2. Is there a verb?
3. Is it just a leftover phrase?
4. Is it an abandoned clause?
5. Was "such as," "for example," "especially" misused?

Use ARR and Fix that Fragment:

Attach to another sentence.

Revise by adding what is missing – subject, verb, complete thought.

Rewrite the fragment.

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Language Item Strategies

- Increase student engagement.
- Show students why grammar matters.
- Put grammar in context.
- Create daily grammar challenges.

"LET'S EAT GRANDMA!"
"LET'S EAT, GRANDMA!"
PUNCTUATION SAVES LIVES!

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Food for Thought

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

- Trait 3 of the scoring rubric evaluates standard English writing conventions and clarity.

- Language skills gaps will affect a student's Extended Response score.

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

GED® Extended Response

Instructions

Read
- On the **page 2 tab above,** you will **read two texts** presenting **different views** on the same topic.
- **Both writers argue** that **their position** on the issue is **correct.**

Plan
- **Analyze** the two texts **to determine** which writer presents the **stronger case.**
- **Develop your own argument** in which **you explain** how one position is **better supported** than the other.
- **Include** relevant and specific **evidence** from **both sources** to support your argument.

Write
- **Type** your response in the **box on the right.**
- Your response should be approximately **4 to 7 paragraphs of 3 to 7 sentences each.**
- **Remember** to allow a few minutes **to review and edit your response.**

You have up to **45 minutes** for reading, planning, writing, and editing your response.

✦ Cut   🗐 Copy   📋 Paste   ↺ Undo   ↻ Redo

⚙ Navigator   Next ➜

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GED® Extended Response

- Students read two passages and respond to a prompt (about writing an essay evaluating which passage makes a stronger argument).
- Scored on three traits
  - Trait 1: Creation of Arguments and Use of Evidence
  - Trait 2: Development of Ideas and Organizational Structure
  - Trait 3: Clarity and Command of Standard English Conventions
- Hard skills, but performing well statistically
  - Skills gaps for the GED® Extended Response will be presented in Session 3 for RLA.

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Trait 3 Writing Skills: Conventions & Clarity

Scoring Rubric – Trait 3: Clarity and Command of Standard English Conventions

A Trait 3 response that earns 2 points

- demonstrates largely correct sentence structure and a general fluency that enhances clarity with specific regard to the following skills:

    1) varied sentence structure within a paragraph or paragraphs

    2) correct subordination, coordination and parallelism

    3) avoidance of wordiness and awkward sentence structures

    4) usage of transitional words, conjunctive adverbs and other words that support logic and clarity

    5) avoidance of run-on sentences, fused sentences, or sentence fragments

- demonstrates competent application of conventions with specific regard to the following skills:

    1) frequently confused words and homonyms, including contractions

    2) subject-verb agreement

    3) pronoun usage, including pronoun antecedent agreement, unclear pronoun references, and pronoun case

    4) placement of modifiers and correct word order

    5) capitalization (e.g., proper nouns, titles, and beginnings of sentences)

    6) use of apostrophes with possessive nouns

    7) use of punctuation (e.g., commas in a series or in appositives and other nonessential elements, end marks, and appropriate punctuation for clause separation)

- may contain some errors in mechanics and conventions, but they do not interfere with comprehension; overall, standard usage is at a level appropriate for on-demand draft writing.

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Trait 3 (Conventions & Clarity) Skills Gaps

Score Point 1 (Out of 2)	Score Point 0 (Out of 2)
Mostly correct sentence structure; inconsistent sentence structure	Consistently flawed sentence structure (several fragments, run-on sentences, or comma splices); consistently awkward sentences
Lacks sentence variety; sentences generally varied	Sentences somewhat varied, but structure and fluency issues supersede
Some sentences awkward or lacking fluency	Sentences largely incorrect, awkward, or illogical and demonstrate a lack of fluency; run-ons and awkwardly constructed sentences provide evidence of a lack of overall fluency
Inconsistent control of standard English conventions; lapses in control of conventions (I.e., relating to pronoun usage, punctuation, apostrophe usage, subject-verb agreement)	Minimal control of standard English conventions (I.e., relating to frequently confused words, punctuation, subject-verb agreement, modifier placement, capitalization, pronoun usage)
Errors do not interfere with comprehension (or rarely interfere)	Severe and frequent errors interfere with comprehension ("If we see in everything its right or wrong."); severe errors detract from overall clarity
Standard English usage at an acceptable level of appropriateness for on-demand draft writing	Overall standard English usage at an unacceptable level for on-demand draft writing
--	Response too brief for writer to demonstrate their skills in writing conventions and clarity

Extended Response Resources on GED.com

How Responses are Scored

- Annotated responses for each score point

  https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/extended_response_resource_guide.pdf

  - See pages 111-136 for Trait 3

- Sample prompt (Taxation and Revenue) with scoring guide and rubric for each trait

  https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/extended_response_resource_guide_taxation_revenue.pdf

- Example of a perfect score

  https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/extended_response_scoring.pdf

Extended Response Resources on GED.com (Background)

General Information and Sample Prompts/Texts for Practice

- Workbook

  https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/TfT-What-Students-Need-to-Know-GED-RLA-Extended-Response-Workbook-1.pdf

- Answer guidelines

  https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/extended_response_guidelines.pdf

- Videos: How to write a great GED extended response

  https://ged.com/about_test/test_subjects/language_arts/extended_response/

- Sample texts from GED Ready® practice test
  https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/extended_response_ged_ready_source_texts.pdf

- Sample prompts for practice

  https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/extended_response_classroom_practice.pdf

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Coming Soon!

Reasoning Through Language Arts, Part Two: Reading

Reasoning Through Language Arts, Part Three: Writing

- Trait 1

- Trait 2

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Thank you!

Communicate with GED Testing Service®
help@ged.com

Debi Faucette – Debi.Faucette@ged.com
Susan Pittman – skptvs@gmail.com

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