ETS® GRE®

A Deeper Dive into the *GRE*® General Test

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Overview

- Overview of the *GRE*® General Test

- General Tips and Strategies

- Preparing for the Verbal Reasoning Measure

- Preparing for the Quantitative Reasoning Measure

- Preparing for the Analytical Writing Measure

- *GRE*® Resources

Overview of the
GRE® General Test

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Skills Assessed on the Verbal Reasoning Measure

Assesses ability to:

- Analyze and evaluate written material and synthesize information obtained from it

- Analyze relationships among component parts of sentences

- Recognize relationships among words and concepts

Skills Assessed on the Quantitative Reasoning Measure

- Assesses:
  - Basic mathematical skills
  - Understanding of elementary mathematical concepts
  - Ability to reason quantitatively and to model and solve problems with quantitative methods

- Mathematical knowledge expected of test takers:
  - Basic concepts of arithmetic, algebra, geometry and data analysis
    - Includes high-school level mathematics and statistics, generally no higher than Algebra 2
    - Excludes trigonometry, calculus and higher college-level mathematics

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Skills Assessed on the Analytical Writing Measure

- Integrates the assessment of critical thinking and analytical writing

- Assesses ability to

  - Articulate and support complex ideas

  - Construct and evaluate arguments

  - Sustain a focused and coherent discussion

- Does not assess specific content knowledge

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The *GRE*® General Test

GRE® General Test Structure and Length

ANALYTICAL WRITING
1 SECTION
2 TASKS TOTAL
30 MINS PER TASK

VERBAL REASONING
2 SECTIONS
20 QUESTIONS PER SECTION
30 MINS PER SECTION

QUANTITATIVE REASONING
2 SECTIONS
20 QUESTIONS PER SECTION
35 MINS PER SECTION

The test also includes:

- Either an **unscored** section or a **research** section that does not count toward your scores
  - If you get an unscored section, you will not know which one it is, so try your best on all the sections
  - If you get a research section, it will always be last and will be clearly marked

Approximate total testing time = 3 hours and 45 minutes (plus timed breaks)

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A Closer Look at the Test-taker Friendly Design

- You can move freely within a section.

- You can mark questions that you want to come back to within a section.

- You can review your activity within a section.

- An on-screen calculator is available in the Quantitative Reasoning sections.

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The Review Screen

- Allows you to view the status of the test questions in the section.

- The list contains each question number in the section, whether you have answered the question, and whether you marked the question for review.

GRE® General Test Scores

Three scores are reported on the following score scales:

ANALYTICAL WRITING
0–6,
in half-point increments

VERBAL REASONING
130–170,
in 1-point increments

QUANTITATIVE REASONING
130–170,
in 1-point increments
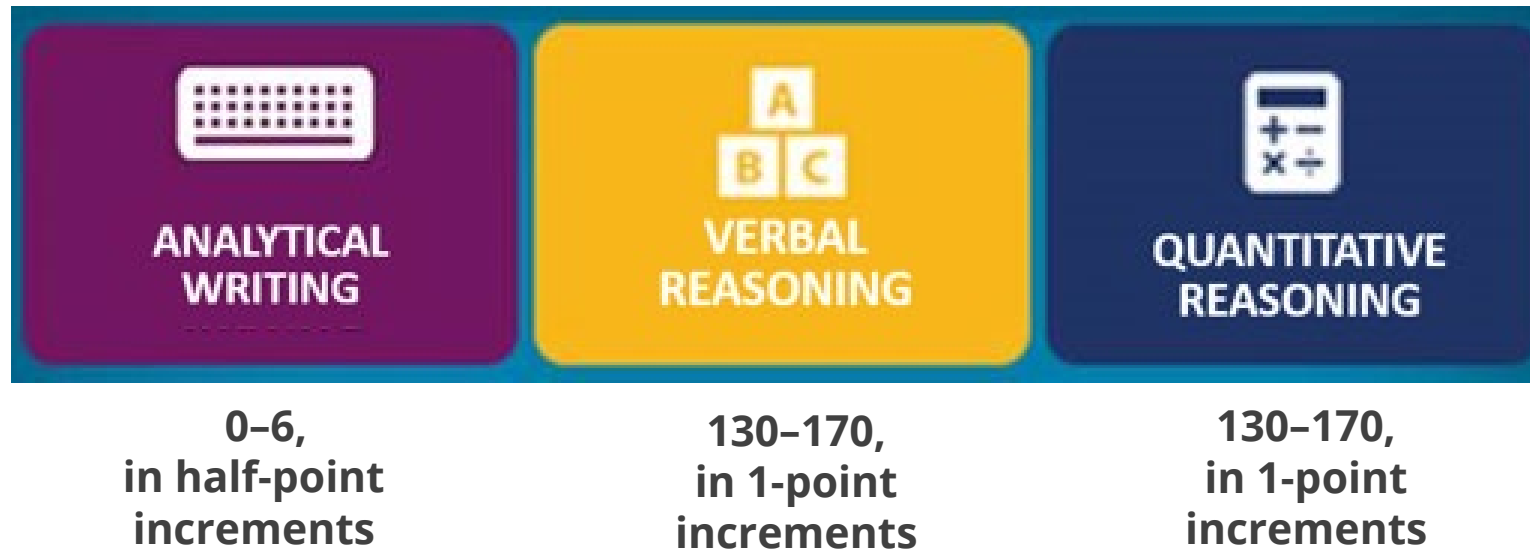
Put Your Best Scores Forward with the *ScoreSelect®* Option

On Test Day

You can view your scores at the end of your test.

Use your 4 FREE score reports

- **Most Recent** option – Send scores from most recent test

- **All** option – Send scores from all tests in the last 5 years

After Test Day

You can view your scores via your ETS Account.

Use Additional Score Reports

- **Most Recent** option – Send scores from most recent test

- **All** option – Send scores from all tests in the last 5 years

- **Any** option – Send scores from one OR many tests in the last 5 years

Note: Some schools want to see applicants' scores from all GRE tests they have taken. We advise you to check with the schools to which you are applying for their requirements.

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General Tips and Strategies

General Tips and Strategies

- Become familiar with question formats and directions beforehand.

- Be aware of time.

- Make sure you understand what each question is asking by reading each question thoroughly and reading all answer choices before answering.

  - There is no credit for partially correct answers.

- Answer every question, even if you have to make a best guess.

- Use knowledge you have to figure out answers to unfamiliar questions.

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General Tips and Strategies (continued)

- Do not waste time on questions you find extremely difficult, since no question carries greater weight than any other.

- Do not spend too much time on the review screen, as this will take away from the time you have to spend on the test questions.

- Check the review screen before finishing a section to ensure you have answered all questions.

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Preparing for the
Verbal Reasoning Measure

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Content of the Verbal Reasoning Measure

- Contains three question types:
  - Reading Comprehension Sets
  - Text Completion Questions
  - Sentence Equivalence Questions
- To accommodate different interests and backgrounds, there is a balance of questions in
  - Natural Sciences
  - Social Sciences
  - Humanities
- No specific knowledge of any subject is required.

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Reading Comprehension Sets

- Consist of a passage and one or more associated questions

- Require you to read and to understand what is read

  - Recognizing purpose and main idea

  - Recognizing specific points made

  - Recognizing assumptions

  - Making inferences

  - Evaluating purpose and structure

- Each reading passage contains all of the information needed to answer the questions that follow it.

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Reading Comprehension Question Formats

- Multiple Choice — Select One Answer Choice
  - Five answer choices, choose correct one
- Multiple Choice — Select One or More Answer Choices
  - Three answer choices, choose all that apply
- Select in Passage
  - Choose the sentence in the passage that fits a given description

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Reading Comprehension:
Multiple Choice — Select One Answer Choice

Description:

- Traditional multiple-choice questions with five answer choices, of which you must select one.

Reading Comprehension:
Multiple Choice — Select One Answer Choice (continued)

ETS GRE Test Preview Tool

Exit Section | Mark | Review | Help | Back | Next

Section 2 of 3 | Question 2 of 7   00:18:46 ⊖ Hide Time

Questions 1 to 3 are based on this passage.

Reviving the practice of using elements of popular music in classical composition, an approach that had been in hibernation in the United States during the 1960s, composer Philip Glass (born 1937) embraced the ethos of popular music in his compositions. Glass based two symphonies on music by rock musicians David Bowie and Brian Eno, but the symphonies' sound is distinctively his. Popular elements do not appear out of place in Glass's classical music, which from its early days has shared certain harmonies and rhythms with rock music. Yet this use of popular elements has not made Glass a composer of popular music. His music is not a version of popular music packaged to attract classical listeners; it is high art for listeners steeped in rock rather than the classics.

The passage addresses which of the following issues related to Glass's use of popular elements in his classical compositions?

○ How it is regarded by listeners who prefer rock to the classics

○ How it has affected the commercial success of Glass's music

○ Whether it has contributed to a revival of interest among other composers in using popular elements in their compositions

○ Whether it has had a detrimental effect on Glass's reputation as a composer of classical music

● Whether it has caused certain of Glass's works to be derivative in quality

Select one answer choice.

Strategies:

- Read all the answer choices before making your selection, even if you think you know the correct answer in advance.

- Be careful not to be misled by answer choices that are only partially true or that only partially answer the question. Also, be careful not to pick an answer choice simply because it is a true statement.

- When the question asks about the meaning of a word in the passage, be sure the answer choice you select correctly represents the way the word is being used in the passage. Many words have different meanings when used in different contexts.

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Reading Comprehension:
Multiple Choice — Select One or More Answer Choices

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Exit Section | Mark | Review | Help | Back | Next

Section 2 of 3 | Question 1 of 7   00:21:25 ⊖ Hide Time

Questions 1 to 3 are based on this passage.

Reviving the practice of using elements of popular music in classical composition, an approach that had been in hibernation in the United States during the 1960s, composer Philip Glass (born 1937) embraced the ethos of popular music in his compositions. Glass based two symphonies on music by rock musicians David Bowie and Brian Eno, but the symphonies' sound is distinctively his. Popular elements do not appear out of place in Glass's classical music, which from its early days has shared certain harmonies and rhythms with rock music. Yet this use of popular elements has not made Glass a composer of popular music. His music is not a version of popular music packaged to attract classical listeners; it is high art for listeners steeped in rock rather than the classics.

Consider each of the choices separately and select all that apply.

The passage suggests that Glass's work displays which of the following qualities?

☐ A return to the use of popular music in classical compositions

☐ An attempt to elevate rock music to an artistic status more closely approximating that of classical music

☐ A long-standing tendency to incorporate elements from two apparently disparate musical styles

Select one or more answer choices.

Description:

- Provide three answer choices and ask you to select all that are correct; one, two or all three of the answer choices may be correct.

- To gain credit for these questions, you must select all the correct answers, and only those.

Reading Comprehension:
Multiple Choice — Select One or More Answer Choices (continued)

Strategies:

- Evaluate each answer choice separately on its own merits; when evaluating one answer choice, do not take the others into account.

- Be careful not to be misled by answer choices that are only partially true or that only partially answer the question. Also, be careful not to pick an answer choice simply because it is a true statement.

- Do not be disturbed if you think all three answer choices are correct, since questions of this type can have up to three correct answer choices.

Test Preview Tool

Section 2 of 3 | Question 1 of 7

00:20:10 ⊖ Hide Time

Questions 1 to 3 are based on this passage.

Reviving the practice of using elements of popular music in classical composition, an approach that had been in hibernation in the United States during the 1960s, composer Philip Glass (born 1937) embraced the ethos of popular music in his compositions. Glass based two symphonies on music by rock musicians David Bowie and Brian Eno, but the symphonies' sound is distinctively his. Popular elements do not appear out of place in Glass's classical music, which from its early days has shared certain harmonies and rhythms with rock music. Yet this use of popular elements has not made Glass a composer of popular music. His music is not a version of popular music packaged to attract classical listeners; it is high art for listeners steeped in rock rather than the classics.

Consider each of the choices separately and select all that apply.

The passage suggests that Glass's work displays which of the following qualities?

☒ A return to the use of popular music in classical compositions

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☒ A long-standing tendency to incorporate elements from two apparently disparate musical styles

Select one or more answer choices.

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Reading Comprehension:
Select in Passage

Test Preview Tool

Exit Section | Mark | Review | Help | Back | Next

Section 2 of 3 | Question 3 of 7   00:29:32 ⊖ Hide Time

Questions 1 to 3 are based on this passage.

Reviving the practice of using elements of popular music in classical composition, an approach that had been in hibernation in the United States during the 1960s, composer Philip Glass (born 1937) embraced the ethos of popular music in his compositions. Glass based two symphonies on music by rock musicians David Bowie and Brian Eno, but the symphonies' sound is distinctively his. Popular elements do not appear out of place in Glass's classical music, which from its early days has shared certain harmonies and rhythms with rock music. Yet this use of popular elements has not made Glass a composer of popular music. His music is not a version of popular music packaged to attract classical listeners; it is high art for listeners steeped in rock rather than the classics.

Select the sentence that distinguishes two ways of integrating rock and classical music.

Select a sentence in the passage.

Description:

- Ask you to select the sentence in the passage that meets a certain description.

- To select a sentence, click on any word in the sentence or select the sentence with the keyboard.

- In longer passages, the question will usually apply to only one or two specified paragraphs; you will not be able to select a sentence elsewhere in the passage.

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Reading Comprehension:
Select in Passage (continued)

Strategies:

- Evaluate each of the relevant sentences in the passage separately before selecting your answer. Do not evaluate any sentences that are outside the paragraphs under consideration.

- Do not select a sentence if any part of the description does not apply to it. However, note that the question need not fully describe all aspects of the sentence.

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Strategies for Reading Comprehension Sets — Reading the Passage

- Read the passage and get a sense of its overall meaning and purpose.

- Make notes.

- Note key words and phrases and try to clarify what is being expressed.

- Note which claims the author makes and which are made by others and merely described by the author.

- Similarly, note whether the author is hypothesizing something or maintaining it with some certainty.

Strategies for Reading Comprehension Sets — Reading the Passage (continued)

- Remember that all the necessary information to answer each question is in the passage

  - Subject-matter knowledge is not needed to answer the questions

  - Even with unfamiliar material, with a little work the questions can be answered

- When practicing to take the test, try to determine which method is best for you:

  - Whether to read the passage thoroughly first

  - Whether to skim the passage first

  - Whether to look at each question before reading the passage

Text Completion Questions

Description:

- Consist of one or more sentences with one to three blanks.

- Answer choices consist of alternatives for filling the blanks.

- Answer choices are independent.

- Require you to grasp the meaning of the sentences and, by analyzing the relationships among their parts, to select the most appropriate word or words to fill in the blanks.

Text Completion Questions (continued)

For each blank select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

It is refreshing to read a book about our planet by an author who does not allow facts to be (i)_____ by politics: well aware of the political disputes about the effects of human activities on climate and biodiversity, this author does not permit them to (ii)_____ his comprehensive description of what we know about our biosphere. He emphasizes the enormous gaps in our knowledge, the sparseness of our observations, and the (iii)_____, calling attention to the many aspects of planetary evolution that must be better understood before we can accurately diagnose the condition of our planet.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
overshadowed	enhance	plausibility of our hypotheses
invalidated	obscure	certainty of our entitlement
illuminated	underscore	superficiality of our theories

Select one entry from each column.

Strategies:

- Read the passage to get an overall sense of it.

- Identify words or phrases that seem particularly significant.

- Try to fill in the blanks with your own words and find answer choices that match.

- Focus on whichever blank seems easiest to complete.

- After making your answer choices, reread the whole passage to be sure it makes sense.

- When filling a blank, ask yourself
    - Should the word be similar to or contrasted with a nearby word in the passage?
    - Should the word have a positive or negative character?

Sentence Equivalence Questions

Description:

- Consist of a single sentence with one blank and six answer choices.

- Require you to find the **two** answer choices that complete the sentence coherently and also produce sentences alike in meaning.

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Sentence Equivalence Questions (continued)

Strategies:

- Read the sentence to get an overall sense of it.

- Identify words or phrases that seem particularly significant.

- Try to fill in the blank with your own words and find answer choices that match.

- After making your answer choices, reread the two completed sentences to be sure they both make sense and say the same thing.

Sentence Equivalence Questions (continued)

GRE Practice Test 1

Exit Section | Quit w/Save | Mark | Review | Help | Back | Next

Section 2 of 5 | Question 13 of 20   ⊙ Show Time

Select the <u>two</u> answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole <u>and</u> produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

The macromolecule RNA is common to all living beings, and DNA, which is found in all organisms except some bacteria, is almost as _____.

- ☐ comprehensive
- ☐ fundamental
- ☐ inclusive
- ☒ universal
- ☐ significant
- ☒ ubiquitous

Select two answer choices.

Strategies:

- Do not assume that if two of the answer choices have the same meaning, they are the correct answer.
  - The answer choices will often contain words that do not fit the sentence.
  - The two correct choices do not themselves have to have the same meaning.
- When filling a blank, ask yourself
  - Should the word be similar to or contrasted with a nearby word in the passage?
  - Should the word have a positive or negative character?

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Finding *GRE*® Level Reading Materials

- Look for material that presents an argument supported by reasoning and/or evidence. Such material can be found in a variety of places:

  - Specialized academic journals

  - Feature articles in newspapers and periodicals such as *The New York Times*, *The Economist, Scientific American* or *London Review of Books*

  - Trade books by experts and journalists for general audiences

- Textbooks and popular periodicals generally do not demonstrate the kind of complexity that is found in GRE reading passages.

Preparing for the Quantitative Reasoning Section

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Mathematical Knowledge Expected

Arithmetic

- Elementary operations

- Number line

- Estimation

- Percent, ratio and rates

- Absolute value

- Properties of integers, such as divisibility, odd and even integers and prime numbers

Algebra

- Algebraic expressions and manipulations

- Functions and their graphs

- Coordinate geometry

- Solving equations and inequalities

- Modeling and solving word problems with algebra

ETS GRE

Mathematical Knowledge Expected (continued)

Geometry

- Elementary geometric figures and concepts such as lines, circles, triangles, quadrilaterals and other polygons

- Angle measure, area, perimeter, volume and the Pythagorean theorem

- Intuitive geometric concepts; for example, the sum of any two sides of a triangle is greater than the third side

Note: The ability to construct proofs is **not** measured.

Data Analysis

- Basic descriptive statistics such as mean, median, mode, range, interquartile range, percentile and standard deviation

- Frequency distributions

- Interpretation of data presentations, including bar graphs, line graphs, circle graphs, boxplots and scatterplots

- Elementary probability, including random variables and probability distributions, such as the normal distribution

- Counting methods

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Free Tools to Help You Prepare

- ***GRE® Math Review***

  - This 100-page math refresher includes definitions, properties, examples and a set of exercises with answers at the end of each section.

  - Includes links to additional help in the Khan Academy®.

- ***GRE® Math Conventions***

  - Mathematical notations, symbols, terminology and guidelines are included for interpreting information in the *GRE®* General Test.

www.ets.org/gre/prepare

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On-screen Calculator

- Operated with the keyboard or mouse.

- Has four arithmetic functions, square root, memory and parentheses.

- Has a Transfer Display button to transfer a number to a Numeric Entry question (with a single answer box).

- Respects order of operations (e.g., the result of 1 + 2 x 3 is 7, not 9).

- Most questions do not require difficult computations, so the calculator should be used only when needed (e.g., larger numbers, long divisions or multiplications, square root, etc.).

- Only available in the Quantitative Reasoning section

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Quantitative Reasoning Question Types

- Multiple Choice — Select One Answer Choice
    - Five answer choices, choose the correct one
- Multiple Choice — Select One or More Answer Choices
    - Select one or more choices from a list
- Quantitative Comparison Questions
    - Compare two quantities
- Numeric Entry Questions
    - Enter a numerical answer in an answer box or boxes
- Some questions are in Data Interpretation sets
    - Several consecutive questions about the same data presentation
- Some questions involve real-life scenarios

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Multiple Choice — Select One Answer Choice

Description:

- Traditional multiple-choice questions with five answer choices, of which you must select one.

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Multiple Choice — Select One Answer Choice (continued)

A car got 33 miles per gallon using gasoline that cost $2.95 per gallon. Approximately what was the cost, in dollars, of the gasoline used in driving the car 350 miles?

○ $10

○ $20

● $30

○ $40

○ $50

Select one answer choice.

Strategies:

- Use the fact that the correct answer is *there*.

- Examine the answer choices to get a better sense of what is being asked.

- For questions that require approximations, scan the answer choices to see how close an approximation is needed.

Multiple Choice — Select One or More Answer Choices

GRE Test Preview Tool

Exit Section | Calc | Mark | Review | Help | Back | Next

Section 3 of 3 | Question 5 of 11   00:30:02 ⊖ Hide Time

Which of the following integers are multiples of both 2 and 3 ?

Indicate **all** such integers.

☐ 8
☐ 9
☐ 12
☐ 18
☐ 21
☐ 36

Select one or more answer choices.

Description:

- Ask you to select one or more answer choices from a list of choices.

- A question may or may not specify the number of choices to select.

Multiple Choice — Select One or More Answer Choices (continued)

Which of the following integers are multiples of both 2 and 3 ?

Indicate <u>all</u> such integers.

☐ 8

☐ 9

☒ 12

☒ 18

☐ 21

☒ 36

Select one or more answer choices.

Strategies:
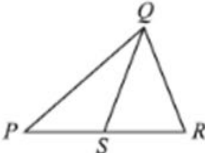
- Note whether you are asked to indicate a specific number of answer choices or all choices that apply.

- Some questions ask for possible values of a quantity in a given scenario. It may be efficient to determine the least and/or greatest possible value, perhaps with inequalities, before considering the answer choices.

- Avoid lengthy calculations by recognizing and continuing numerical patterns.

Quantitative Comparison Questions

Description:

- Questions of this type ask test takers to compare two quantities — Quantity A and Quantity B — and then determine which of the following statements describes the comparison:

  - Quantity A is greater.

  - Quantity B is greater.

  - The two quantities are equal.

  - The relationship cannot be determined from the information given.

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Quantitative Comparison Questions (continued)

Strategies:

- Become familiar with the answer choices.

- Avoid unnecessary computations.

- Remember that geometric figures are not necessarily drawn to scale.

- Plug in numbers.

- Simplify the comparison.

Numeric Entry Questions

Section 3 of 3 | Question 8 of 11   00:26:54 ⊖ Hide Time

A merchant made a profit of $5 on the sale of a sweater that cost the merchant $15. What is the profit expressed as a percent of the merchant's cost?

Give your answer to the nearest whole percent.

☐ %

Enter your answer as an integer or a decimal in the answer box. Backspace to erase.

Description:

- Enter your answer as an integer or a decimal if there is a single answer box.

- Enter your answer as a fraction if there are two separate boxes — one for the numerator and one for the denominator.

- Use the computer mouse and keyboard to enter your answer.

- For a single answer box, a number can be transferred to the box from the on-screen calculator.

- Enter the exact answer unless the question requires you to round your answer.

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Numeric Entry Questions (continued)

ETS GRE Test Preview Tool

Exit Section | Calc | Mark | Review | Help | Back | Next

Section 3 of 3 | Question 8 of 11   00:33:45 ⊖ Hide Time

A merchant made a profit of $5 on the sale of a sweater that cost the merchant $15. What is the profit expressed as a percent of the merchant's cost?

Give your answer to the nearest whole percent.

33 %

0.3333333

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Transfer Display

Enter your answer as an integer or a decimal in the answer box. Backspace to erase.

Strategies:

- Make sure you answer the question that is asked.

- If asked to round your answer, make sure you round to the required degree of accuracy.

- Examine your answer to see if it is reasonable with respect to the information given.

Data Interpretation Questions

Questions 9– 11 are based on the following data.

ANNUAL PERCENT CHANGE IN DOLLAR AMOUNT OF SALES
AT FIVE RETAIL STORES FROM 2006 TO 2008

| | Percent Change | |
Store	From 2006 to 2007	From 2007 to 2008
P	10	−10
Q	−20	9
R	5	12
S	−7	−15
T	17	−8

If the dollar amount of sales at Store P was $800,000 for 2006, what was the dollar amount of sales at that store for 2008 ?

- ○ $727,200
- ○ $792,000
- ○ $800,000
- ○ $880,000
- ○ $968,000

Select one answer choice.

Description:

- Data Interpretation questions are grouped together and refer to the same table, graph or other data presentation.

- These questions ask test takers to interpret or analyze the given data.

- The types of questions may be Multiple Choice (both types) or Numeric Entry.

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Data Interpretation Questions (continued)

GRE Test Preview Tool

Exit Section | Calc | Mark | Review | Help | Back | Next

Section 3 of 3 | Question 9 of 11   00:32:20 ⊖ Hide Time

Questions 9– 11 are based on the following data.

ANNUAL PERCENT CHANGE IN DOLLAR AMOUNT OF SALES
AT FIVE RETAIL STORES FROM 2006 TO 2008

Percent Change

Store	From 2006 to 2007	From 2007 to 2008
P	10	−10
Q	−20	9
R	5	12
S	−7	−15
T	17	−8

If the dollar amount of sales at Store P was $800,000 for 2006, what was the dollar amount of sales at that store for 2008 ?

○ $727,200
● $792,000
○ $800,000
○ $880,000
○ $968,000

Select one answer choice.

Strategies:

- Scan the data presentation briefly to see what it is about, but do not spend time studying all of the information in detail.

- Bar graphs and circle graphs, as well as other graphical displays of data, are drawn to scale, so you can read or estimate data visually from such graphs.

- The questions are to be answered only on the basis of the data presented, everyday facts (such as the number of days in a year), and your knowledge of mathematics.

General Strategies for the Quantitative Reasoning Measure

- Read carefully so that you don't overlook information or misread the question. You don't want to answer something that is not being asked.

- Be careful not to make unwarranted assumptions. For example, not all numbers are integers nor are all numbers positive.

- Search for general mathematical relationships among the quantities in a question.

- Geometric figures may not be drawn to scale, so avoid estimating sizes by sight or by measurement on such figures.

- If applicable, draw your own diagram or figure, or make a list to help sort out what the question is asking.

General Strategies (continued)

- When appropriate, avoid lengthy calculations by rounding numbers before computing an estimate, by looking for comparisons, and by recognizing and continuing numerical patterns.

- Some questions are most naturally answered by systematically considering several cases of the situation that is described.

- For some questions, a fast way to a solution is by guessing an answer, checking it out, and then improving on your guess.

- Evaluate your progress and switch to a different strategy if you get stuck or if a solution seems to require an inordinate amount of time.

- After arriving at an answer, reread the question to make sure your answer is reasonable, given what was asked.

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General Problem-Solving Steps

Step 1: Understand the problem

- The first step in solving a mathematics problem is to read the statement of the problem carefully to make sure you understand the information given and the problem you are being asked to solve.

Step 2: Carry out a strategy for solving the problem

- Solving a mathematics problem also requires determining what mathematical facts to use and when and how to use those facts to develop a solution to the problem. It requires a strategy.

Step 3: Check the answer

- After arriving at an answer, check that it is reasonable and computationally correct and that it answers the question that was asked.

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Specific Strategies for the Quantitative Reasoning Measure

- Translate
    - from words to an arithmetic or algebraic representation
    - from words to a figure or diagram
    - from an algebraic to a graphical representation
    - from a figure to an arithmetic or algebraic representation
- Simplify an arithmetic or algebraic representation
- Add to a geometric figure
- Find a pattern
- Search for a mathematical relationship

- Estimate
- Trial and error
    - Make a reasonable guess and then refine it
    - Try more than one value of a variable
- Divide into cases
- Adapt solutions to related problems
- Determine whether a conclusion follows from the information given
- Determine what additional information is sufficient to solve a problem.
- Switch to a different strategy if you get stuck or if a solution seems to require an inordinate amount of time.

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See www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/prepare/quantitative_reasoning/problem_solving

Preparing for the Analytical Writing Section

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Content of the Analytical Writing Section

- Contains two timed analytical writing tasks:
  - Analyze an Issue task
  - Analyze an Argument task
- Essay responses are typed on the computer
  - ETS software has a basic word processor that contains the following functionalities:
    - o Insert text
    - o Delete text
    - o Cut and paste
    - o Undo the previous action.
- Tools such as a spell checker and grammar checker are not available

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Analyze an Issue Task

Description:

- Presents a brief quotation that states or implies an issue of general interest and specific instructions on how to respond to that issue.

- Requires you to analyze the issue and develop an argument with reasons and/or examples to support that position.

- You have 30 minutes to plan and compose your response.

- A response to an issue other than the one assigned will receive a score of zero.

Directions for Analyze an Issue Task Variants

You may be asked to focus your analysis of the given issue in a number of different ways:

- Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

- Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the recommendation and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, describe specific circumstances in which adopting the recommendation would or would not be advantageous and explain how these examples shape your position.

- Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim and the reason on which that claim is based.

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Directions for Analyze an Issue Task Variants (continued)

- Write a response in which you discuss your views on the policy and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider the possible consequences of implementing the policy and explain how these consequences shape your position.

- Write a response in which you discuss which view more closely aligns with your own position and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should address both of the views presented.

- Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim. In developing and supporting your position, be sure to address the most compelling reasons and/or examples that could be used to challenge your position.

Strategies for Analyze an Issue Tasks

Questions to consider when approaching the Issue task:

- What precisely is the central issue?

- What precisely are the instructions asking me to do?

- Do I agree with all or with any part of the claim? Why or why not?

- Do I agree with the claim only under certain circumstances? What are those circumstances?

- Does the claim make certain assumptions? If so, are they reasonable?

- 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?

- What reasons might someone use to refute or undermine my position?

- How should I acknowledge or defend against those views in my essay?

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General Reminders About the Analyze an Issue Task

- You must respond to the assigned issue using the specific task directions.

- Feel free to accept, reject or qualify the claim.

- There is no "right answer."

- You must make it clear how your reasons and/or examples support your position on the issue.

Analyze an Argument Task

GRE Test Preview Tool

Help

Next

Section 1 of 3 | Question 2 of 2   00:29:57 ⊖ Hide Time

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In surveys Mason City residents rank water sports (swimming, boating, and fishing) among their favorite recreational activities. The Mason River flowing through the city is rarely used for these pursuits, however, and the city park department devotes little of its budget to maintaining riverside recreational facilities. For years there have been complaints from residents about the quality of the river's water and the river's smell. In response, the state has recently announced plans to clean up Mason River. Use of the river for water sports is, therefore, sure to increase. The city government should for that reason devote more money in this year's budget to riverside recreational facilities.

Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on these assumptions and what the implications are for the argument if the assumptions prove unwarranted.

Description:

- Presents a short passage that presents an argument and specific instructions on how to respond to that passage.

- Requires you to assess the logical soundness of the given argument according to the specific task directions.

- You have 30 minutes to plan and compose your response.

- A response to an argument other than the one assigned will receive a score of zero.

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Directions for Analyze an Argument Task Variants

You may be asked to focus your analysis of the given argument in a number of different ways:

- Write a response in which you discuss what specific evidence is needed to evaluate the argument and explain how the evidence would weaken or strengthen the argument.

- Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on these assumptions and what the implications are for the argument if the assumptions prove unwarranted.

- Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the recommendation is likely to have the predicted result. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the recommendation.

- Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the recommendation and the argument on which it is based are reasonable. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the recommendation.

Directions for Analyze an Argument Task Variants (continued)

- Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the advice and the argument on which it is based are reasonable. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the advice.

- Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the prediction and the argument on which it is based are reasonable. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the prediction.

- Write a response in which you discuss one or more alternative explanations that could rival the proposed explanation and explain how your explanation(s) can plausibly account for the facts presented in the argument.

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Key Argument Concepts

Although you do not need to know special analytical techniques and terminology, you should be familiar with the directions for the Argument task and with certain key concepts, including the following:

- **Alternative explanation** — a competing version of what might have caused the events in question that undercuts or qualifies the original explanation because it too can account for the observed facts

- **Analysis** — the process of breaking something (e.g., an argument) down into its component parts in order to understand how they work together to make up the whole

- **Argument** — a claim or a set of claims with reasons and evidence offered as support; a line of reasoning meant to demonstrate the truth or falsehood of something

- **Assumption** — a belief, often unstated or unexamined, that someone must hold in order to maintain a particular position; something that is taken for granted but that must be true in order for the *conclusion* to be true

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Key Argument Concepts (continued)

- **Conclusion** — the end point reached by a line of reasoning, valid if the reasoning is sound; the resulting assertion

- **Counterexample** — an example, real or hypothetical, that refutes or disproves a statement in the *argument*

- **Evaluation** — an assessment of the quality of evidence and reasons in an argument and of the overall merit of an *argument*

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Strategies for the Analyze an Argument Task

Questions to consider when approaching the argument task:

- What is offered as evidence, support or proof?

- What is explicitly stated, claimed or concluded?

- What is assumed or supposed, perhaps without justification or proof?

- What is not stated, but necessarily follows from what is stated?

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General Reminders About the Analyze an Argument Task

- You must respond to the argument using the specific task directions.

- You must make it clear how your specific analysis of the argument connects to the assigned task.

- You are NOT being asked to present your own views on the subject matter.

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Common Sense Test Preparation Rules

- Become familiar with the test structure and timing

- Become familiar with each task type and its variants

- Become familiar with the scoring criteria for each task

- Review published topic pools and practice writing on each task type

- Review sample responses and reader commentary for each task type

- Practice writing under timed conditions

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Approaching the Two Analytical Writing Tasks

- Spend a few minutes thinking about the topic and the specific directions and planning a response.

- Pay close attention to the specific task directions.

- Support your position on the issue with reasons and examples drawn from such areas as your reading, experience, observations, and/or academic studies.

- Leave time to read what you have written and make any revisions that you think are necessary.

- Avoid excessive irony or humor that may be misinterpreted by readers.

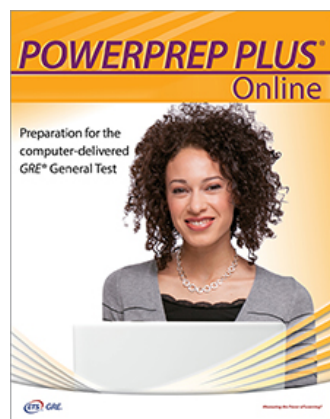ETS® GRE®

GRE® Resources

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FREE *GRE*® Test Preparation

- **Section overviews for each measure** are available on the GRE website. They include general advice, sample questions with explanations, scoring guides and tips for answering question types.

- *POWERPREP*® **Test Preview Tool**: Helps familiarize test takers with the question types, test features and help tools that are available during the actual test.

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- *GRE*® **Math Review:** This 100-page math refresher includes definitions, properties, examples and a set of exercises with answers at the end of each section. Also includes links to additional help in the Khan Academy®.

- *GRE*® **Math Conventions:** Mathematical notations, symbols, terminology and guidelines are included for interpreting information in the *t*est.

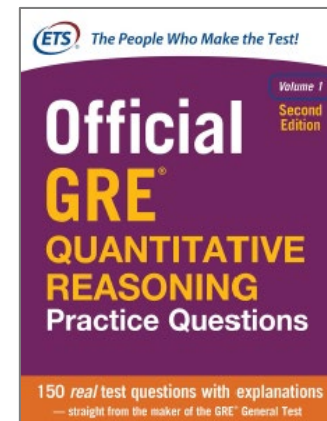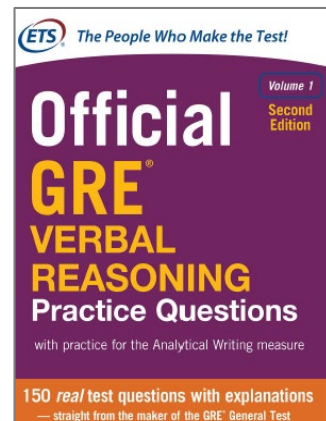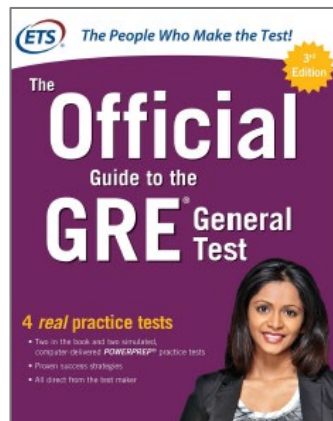- **Practice materials in accessible formats** are available.

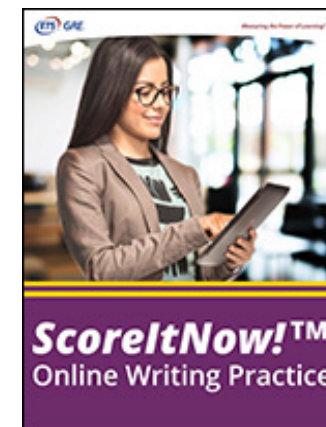Visit **www.ets.org/gre/prepare**.

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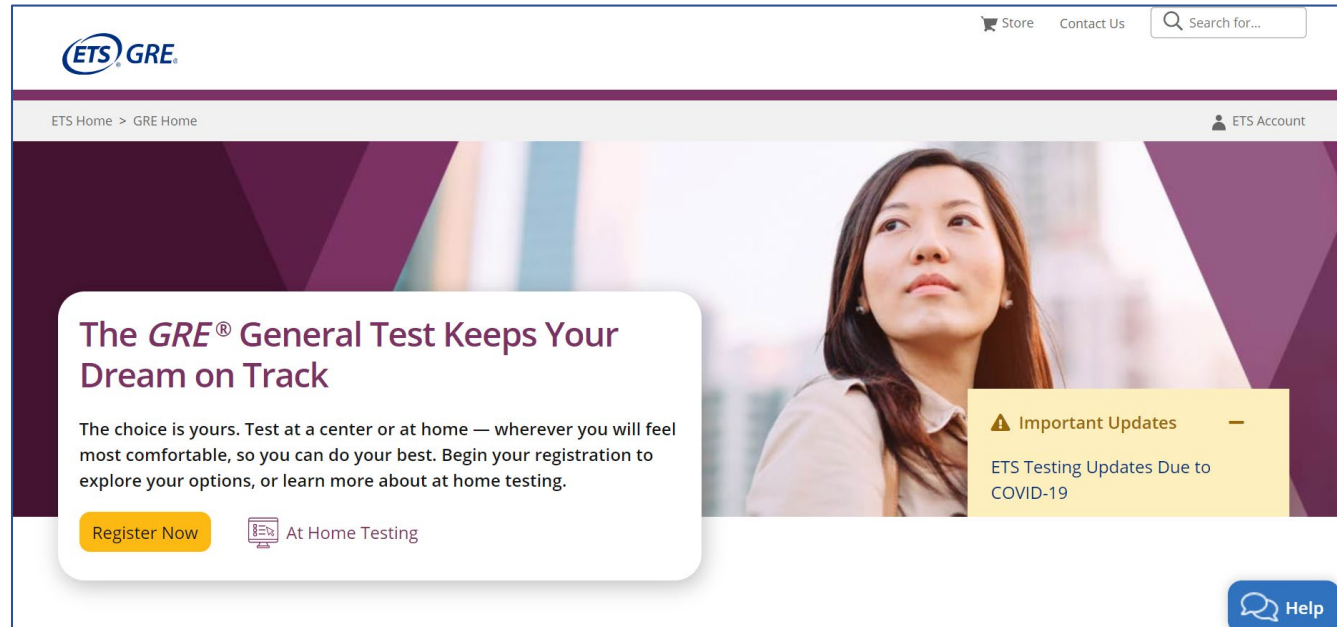**GRE® Practice Books**
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Practice for
Analytical Writing
Section

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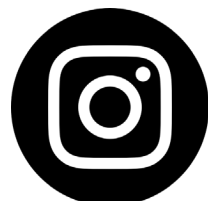
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Questions?

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