

WRITING RHETORICALLY

in

GED WRITING TEST PREPARATION

By Nicholas Hadden

John Hernandez

John Harrison

Writing Rhetorically

(GED Writing Test Preparation)

BEFORE PREWRITING: Students should understand the numerical components of the holistic GED scoring rubric. They should know of the time constraints imposed. Students should have a good background in mechanics, transitions, sentence structure and usage. Additionally, students should be encouraged to free-write about their personal life, experiences, and beliefs, so that they will be able to address GED writing topics that require an argument, taking a side, or pro-con.

After several weeks, use peer review activities to comment on and edit free-writings. Peers look at specific elements of the essay, such as topic sentences, transitions, and conclusions. Peers look for errors in grammar and spelling. (The Minimal Marking Method (The Check-Method) would be an appropriate tool.)

Read your essay out loud. This will help you locate errors and check for fluency. It also helps the writer find his “voice”.

PREWRITING: Read your prompt: Read and re-read your prompt. Make sure you understand what the writing prompt is asking you to do. Identify the purpose of your writing. For example, are you asked to argue, classify, persuade, or inform your readers? Select and draw your graphic organizer as it pertains to your topic to help organize your thoughts, ideas, and selected vocabulary.

Organize your essay: Make sure you have followed the graphic organizer that is specific to your topic in organizing your essay. Gather notes that support your thoughts and ideas. Use the organizer as a tool to retrieve your thoughts and refresh your memory. Use these notes as you compose your draft.

Getting ready to write: Take five minutes to write everything you can about your prompt. Use non-judgmental brain-storming. Collect as much information about the topic as possible. Revise and expand graphic organizer, as needed.

Formulate a working thesis: Write an opening sentence stating your thesis, making sure you sentence addresses the prompt.

WRITING: Compose a draft of your essay: Focus on the prompt. Develop the content. Use alternative expressions. Use descriptive words. Use names of people, locations, and things instead of just pronouns. Choose highly descriptive verbs rather than weak helping verbs. Choose alternative expressions in your essay. Check for grammar errors, sentence structure and spelling. Stay focused on content. Strive for accuracy and precision in your writing.

REVISING AND EDITING: Revise your draft. Re-read and fix any errors you marked using editing marks. Check for grammar errors. Does the introduction have a focused statement?

Revise your draft rhetorically. Check to make sure your essay addresses the topic, your audience, and avoids unnecessary words and redundancy, that is, tighten it up.

Reflect on the writing: Reflect on the essay to see where you can improve the writing (e.g. word choice, appropriate transitions, spelling, etc.) Re-read your essay out loud again.

EVALUATING AND RESPONDING: Grading Holistically: At this point, re-read your essay looking for obvious errors, such as capital letters, misplaced commas, periods, etc. Reflect on the GED Test – Essay Scoring Guide (Rubric).

Responding to writing (Peer Review): Exchange papers with a classmate and respond to the writing. This will involve using another student's essay. You, as the reader, need to tell your essay's author what you think of the essay.

Using Portfolios: Portfolios represent your best work. Place your final copy of your essay on top of all previous copies and your graphic organizer.

Looking at Both Sides of an Issue

YES	<p>INTRODUCTION (contains main theme/focus of your paper)</p>
------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------

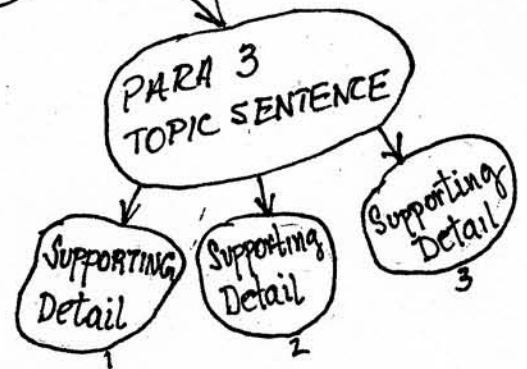
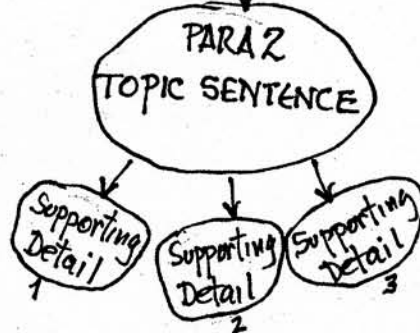
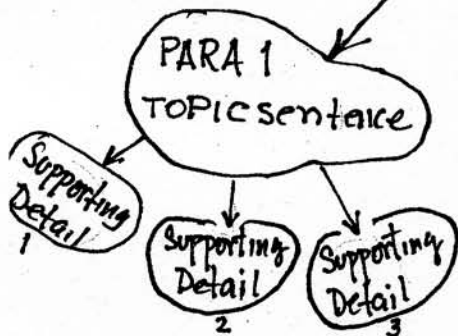
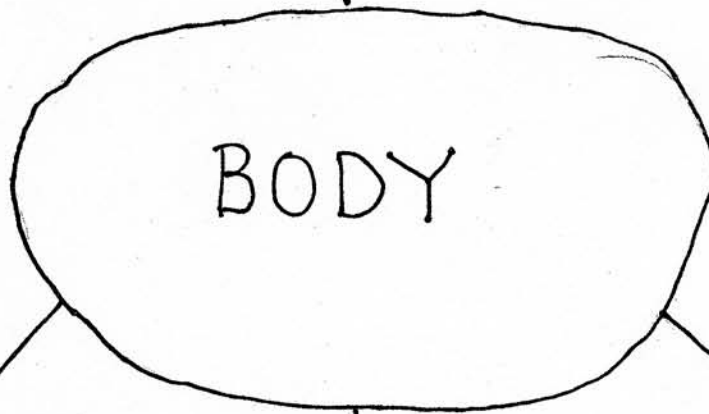
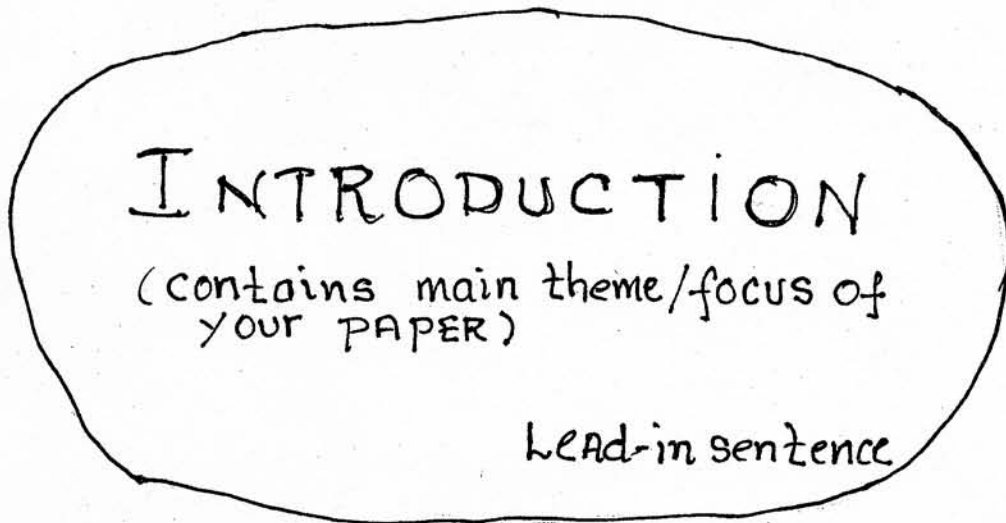
Question

REASONS

Conclusion

NO	
-----------	--

BRAINSTORMING



GED Test -- Essay Scoring Guide (Rubric)

This scoring guide is given for your convenience. Testing sites, the state office and the national GED Testing Service will **NOT** explain to examinees where **“they went wrong”** if examinees desire information about their essays. **Time and costs** would make it impossible to provide this service without substantially increasing testing costs to you, the examinee.

For writing the essays, please consider using the five-paragraph method. Briefly stated, open with an introductory paragraph; build on concepts in paragraphs 2, 3, and 4; and summarize and wrap up in the last paragraph.

Please note that there is NO QUICK FIX to poor grammar skills or poor writing protocol. You have to PRACTICE writing the right way. Check with your local Adult Education program for training.

EAE mentioned below means [“Edited American English.”](#) That is the common sense “rule book” by which grammar is scored.

	1	2	3	4
	Inadequate	Marginal	Adequate	Effective
	Reader has difficulty identifying or following the writer’s ideas.	Reader occasionally has difficulty understanding or following the writer’s ideas.	Reader understands writer’s ideas.	Reader understands and easily follows the writer’s expression of ideas.
Response to the Prompt	Attempts to address prompt but with little or no success in establishing a focus.	Addresses the prompt, though the focus may shift.	Uses the writing prompt to establish a main idea.	Presents a clearly focused main idea that addresses the prompt.
Organization	Fails to organize ideas.	Shows some evidence of an organizational plan.	Uses an identifiable organizational plan.	Establishes a clear and logical organization.
Development and Details	Demonstrates little or no development; usually lacks details or examples or presents irrelevant information.	Has some development but lacks specific details; may be limited to a listing, repetitions, or generalizations.	Has focused but occasionally uneven development; incorporates some specific detail.	Achieves coherent development with specific and relevant details and examples.
Conventions of EAE	May exhibit minimal or no control of sentence structure and the conventions of EAE	May demonstrate inconsistent control of sentence structure and the conventions of EAE.	Generally controls sentence structure and the conventions of EAE.	Consistently controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English (EAE).
Word Choice	Exhibits weak and/or inappropriate words.	Exhibits a narrow range of word choice, often including inappropriate selections.	Exhibits appropriate word choice.	Exhibits varied and precise word choice.

