



GRE Verbal Reasoning

Measures ability to analyze and evaluate writing, synthesize information, analyze relationships of component parts of sentences and of words and concepts.

#1 Reading Comprehension

- Passages are drawn from a variety of subjects (physical sciences, biological sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities, and everyday topics).
- Passages are based on material in books and periodicals, both academic and nonacademic.
- Length ranges from one paragraph to several.
- Each test has ~10 passages.
- Types of questions: multiple choice (can have one or more answers) and select a sentence in the passage.

Try this:

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

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.

#2 Text Completion

- Passages have one to five sentences, with one to three blanks.
- Three choices per blank, or five choices if there is a single blank.
- There is a single correct answer, one choice for each blank.
- No credit for partially correct answers.

Try this:

Vain and prone to violence, Caravaggio could not handle success: the more his (1) _____ as an artist increased, the more (2) _____ his life became.

answer choices (1): temperance notoriety eminence
 (2): tumultuous providential dispassionate

#3 Sentence Equivalence

- Questions consist of a single sentence, one blank, and six answer choices.
- Select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.
- No credit for partially correct answers.

Try this:

Although it does contain some pioneering ideas, one would hardly characterize the work as _____.

answer choices orthodox eccentric original
 conventional innovative trifling

GRE Analytical Writing

Measures your critical thinking and analytical writing skills, specifically your ability to articulate and support complex ideas clearly and effectively. This section consists of two separately timed (30 min) analytical writing tasks:

#1 Analyze an Issue

An issue statement makes a claim.

Your task:

Write an analysis of the claim, according to the specific instructions provided. For example:, you may be asked to discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the recommendation, and then to explain your reasoning for the position you take, or to address the most compelling reasons/examples that could be used to challenge your position.

Try this:

Universities should require every student to take a variety of courses outside the student's field of study.

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.

#2 Analyze an Argument

In a brief passage, the author makes a case for some course of action or interpretation of events by presenting claims backed by reasons and evidence.

Your task:

Discuss the logical soundness of the author's case (according to the specific instructions) by critically examining the line of reasoning and the use of evidence.

Carefully read the argument and the specific instructions. As you think through how you are going to respond, consider the following:

1. Identify the argument's claims, conclusions, and underlying assumptions, then evaluate their quality.
2. Are there any alternative explanations and/or counterexamples?
3. What specific additional evidence might weaken or lend support to the claims?
4. What changes in the argument would make the reasoning more sound?

Try this:

Arctic deer live on islands in Canada's arctic regions. They search for food by moving over ice from island to island during the course of the year. Their habitat is limited to areas warm enough to sustain the plants on which they feed and cold enough, at least some of the year, for the ice to cover the sea separating the islands, allowing the deer to travel over it. Unfortunately, according to reports from local hunters, the deer populations are declining. Since these reports coincide with recent global warming trends that have caused the sea ice to melt, we can conclude that the purported decline in deer populations is the result of the deer's being unable to follow their age-old migration patterns across the frozen sea.

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.

Budget your time

Allow enough time to think about the ideas, plan a response and write your essay. Save a few minutes at the end of each task to check for obvious errors.

Practice early & often

Each day, pick a prompt for the issue or argument task and create an outline of your response. Some days, give yourself 30 minutes to actually write out a complete response

A pool of all possible issue and argument prompts is available at [gre.org](https://www.gre.org)