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Graduate Record Examination General Test

McGraw-Hill's *New* GRE 2011 – 2012 EDITION

Graduate Record Examination General Test

Steven W. Dulan and the Faculty of Advantage Education



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About the Author

Steven W. Dulan, J.D., has been involved with GRE preparation since 1989. A former U.S. Army Infantry Sergeant, Steve scored in the 99th percentile on every standardized test he has ever taken. After graduating from Michigan State, Steve attended The Thomas M. Cooley Law School on a full Honors Scholarship. While attending law school, Steve continued to teach standardized test preparation classes (including ACT, SAT, PSAT, GRE, GMAT, and LSAT) an average of 30 hours each week, and tutored some of his fellow law students in a variety of subjects and in essay exam writing techniques. Professor Dulan has also served as an instructor at Baker University, Cleary University, Lansing Community College, The Ohio State University-Real Estate Institute, and The Thomas M. Cooley Law School. Guest lecturer credits include Michigan State University, University of Michigan, Detroit College of Law, Marquette University, Texas Technical University, University of Miami, and Wright State University.

Thousands of students have benefited from Steve's instruction, coaching, and admissions consulting, and have entered the graduate programs of their choice. Steve's students have gained admission to some of the most prestigious institutions of higher learning in the world, and have received numerous scholarships and fellowships of their own. Since 1997, Steve has served as the president of Advantage Education[®] (www.AdvantageEd.com), a company dedicated to providing effective and affordable test prep education in a variety of settings, including one-on-one tutoring via the Internet worldwide using its Personal Distance Learning[®] system. The information and techniques included in this book are the result of Steve's experiences with test preparation students at all levels over many years.

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McGraw-Hill's *New* GRE 2011 – 2012 EDITION

Graduate Record Examination General Test

PART I

Introduction to the GRE General Test

[CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW OF THE GRE](#)

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1

Overview of the GRE

CHAPTER GOALS

- Learn how the GRE is structured.
- Find out what kinds of questions are on the test.
- Study examples of each question type.
- Learn about the computer adaptive test format.

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test is required by most institutions and programs granting Master or Doctorate degrees, although it is not required by all programs. Not surprisingly, the most competitive programs generally have higher score requirements. Some programs also require Subject Tests, which are beyond the scope of this volume. You should speak to the admissions department at the school to which you are applying to confirm whether you will need to take one or more of the subject tests. For more information on the GRE Subject Tests, visit www.gre.org/gre.

The GRE does not measure your knowledge of business procedures or law, or any specific content area. In addition, it does not measure your value as a person, nor does it predict your success in life. However, the GRE does a fairly good job of predicting how hard you will have to work to understand the material in your chosen program. If you prepare for this test seriously now, you'll sharpen your comprehension, math, and reasoning skills, and be able to focus on the relevant information in your course work much more easily once you start graduate school.

GRE Format

The GRE General Test is a computer-based (or, in some locations, paper-based) test that includes five scored sections: one Analytical Writing section (with two scored writing tasks), two Quantitative sections, and two Verbal sections. Your test will also include an experimental section, called the “pretest” section, which is mixed in with the other sections of the test and appears as either a Verbal or a Quantitative section. There might also be a “research” section, which will always be the final section presented if you have one included in your test. The answers on the pretest and research sections will not count toward your GRE score. The questions are meant to help the test writers at Educational Testing Service (ETS) refine their methods and try out new material that may be included in future GRE tests. The pretest is not identified and will seem like just another test section as you work through it. The research section, if you have one on your test, will be identified as such.

GRE Tip

The GRE is offered as a paper-based test in certain areas of the world where computer testing is not available. International test-takers can find more information in the Welcome section at the start of this book.

The GRE always begins with the two Analytical Writing tasks: the Issue Task and the Argument Task. For both tasks, if you are taking the computer-based GRE, you will write your response using the word processor that is built into the GRE software. The Verbal and Quantitative Sections may appear in any order on your test. When working on these sections, you may skip around, first answering questions that you find less challenging, then coming back to the more difficult questions. Once you have completed a section, you may not go back to it. You are allowed a total of 3 hours and 45 minutes for the computer-based GRE, including the unscored section, and a total of 4 hours and 45 minutes for the paper-based GRE, including the unscored section. [Chapter 6](#) of this book discusses Analytical Writing in detail, while [Chapters 7](#) and [8](#) cover the Quantitative and Verbal sections, respectively.

The basic time breakdown is shown in the following chart. (Note that all sections after Analytical Writing can appear in any order on your actual test, except for the research section, which will come last.)

GRE Test Format (Computer Based)

| Section | Number of Questions | Time Limit |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Analytical Writing | Issue Task | 30 minutes |
| | Argument Task | 30 minutes |
| Verbal (2 sections) | 20 questions per section | 35 minutes per section |
| Quantitative (2 sections) | 20 questions per section | 30 minutes per section |
| Unscored (experimental Verbal or Quantitative Section) | Varies | Varies |
| Research (your GRE might not include this section—if it does, this section will be at the end) | Varies | Varies |

GRE Test Format (Paper Based)

| Section | Number of Questions | Time Limit |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Analytical Writing | Issue Task | 30 minutes |
| | Argument Task | 30 minutes |
| Verbal (2 sections) | 25 questions per section | 35 minutes per section |
| Quantitative (2 sections) | 25 questions per section | 40 minutes per section |
| Unscored (experimental Verbal or Quantitative Section) | Varies | Varies |

Your GRE may contain questions that are similar to released GRE questions that appear on the POWERPREP[®] software or in official GRE publications, such as *The Official Guide to the GRE Revised General Test*. Be very careful when responding to these questions because they might be slightly different from the questions that you remember. There might be different facts in the question stem and there might be different answer choices.

GRE Question Types

In order to simplify the sometimes complicated information on the GRE, you must first understand what you're looking at. The following section provides a simple overview of the kinds of GRE questions that you will encounter.

Analytical Writing

The Analytical Writing section consists of an Issue Task and an Argument Task. You are expected to write essays that address each task. Here are typical examples of what you might see:

Issue Task

You will have 30 minutes to organize your thoughts and compose a response that represents your point of view on the issue. Do not respond to any issue other than the one presented; a response to any other issue will receive a score of 0.

Issue Topic

“Leaders should focus more on the needs of the majority than on the needs of the minority.”

Discuss whether you agree or disagree with the statement. Use relevant reasons and examples to support your point of view. In developing and supporting your position, consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true. Explain how those considerations affect your point of view.

Argument Task

You will have 30 minutes to organize your thoughts and compose a response that critiques the given argument. Do not respond to any argument other than the one given; a response to any other argument will receive a score of 0.

Argument Topic

The following appeared as part of an article in a health and fitness magazine:

“Several volunteers participated in a study of consumer responses to the new Exer-Core exercise machine. Every day for a month, they worked out on the machine for 30 minutes in addition to maintaining their normal fitness regimen. At the end of that month, most of the volunteers reported significant improvement in both their stamina and muscle condition. Therefore, it appears that the Exer-Core exercise machine is truly effective in improving a person's overall general health and fitness.”

Critique the reasoning used in the argument above. You are not being asked to discuss your point of view on the argument. You should identify and analyze the central elements of the argument, the underlying assumptions that are being made, and any supporting information that is given. You

critique can also discuss other information that would strengthen or weaken the argument or make more logical.

Strategies to help you write high-scoring essays are included in [Chapter 6](#), “GRE Analytic Writing.”

Verbal

The Verbal sections of the GRE General Test include Sentence Equivalence, Reading Comprehension, and Text Completion questions. The questions do not appear in any predetermined order, nor is there any set number of each question type on any given GRE General Test. You should take as many practice tests as you can in order to become familiar with the format of the GRE verbal section.

Strategies specific to each of the question types outlined below can be found in [Chapter 8](#), “GRE Verbal.”

Sentence Equivalence

Select the words that, when inserted in the blank(s), best fit the context of the sentence and complete the sentence in the same manner.

Because of his _____, Brian’s guests felt very welcome and comfortable staying at his house for the weekend.

- A animosity
- B hospitality
- C determination
- D wittiness
- E severity
- F generosity

Reading Comprehension

The GRE has three types of Reading Comprehension questions: Multiple-choice, Select One Answer; Multiple-choice, Select One or More Answers; and In-passage. The reading passages are usually just one or two paragraphs in length, and the number of questions per passage varies from one to six. The different types of questions do not appear in any predetermined order, nor is there a set number of each question type on every GRE General Test. A sample of each of the three question types is shown below.

Questions 1 to 3 are based on the following passage.

Scientists know very little about the eating habits of our ancestors who lived over two and a half million years ago. To solve this problem, scientists have started examining chimpanzees’ hunting behavior and diet to find clues about our own prehistoric past. It is not difficult to determine what studying chimpanzees might be beneficial. Modern humans and chimpanzees are actually very close

related. Experts believe that chimpanzees share about 98.5 percent of our DNA sequence. If this true, humans are more closely related to chimpanzees than they are to any other animal species.

1. The main purpose of the passage is to

- (A) explore biological and physiological similarities between humans and chimpanzees
- (B) examine the hunting behavior and diet of chimpanzees and compare it to human activity
- (C) discuss the health benefits of eating and hunting meat while simultaneously predicting the effect of this behavior on chimpanzee offspring
- (D) bring attention to the pioneering research of Dr. Jane Goodall in Tanzania
- (E) educate the public on the impact that tool use had on early human societies

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

2. With which of the following statements is the author most likely to agree?

- (A) Organisms that share a large percentage of DNA share similar characteristics.
- (B) It has been difficult to study the eating habits of ancient man.
- (C) Human behavior cannot be determined by comparing it to the behavior of animals.

3. Select the sentence that indicates a solution to the problem identified in the passage.

Text Completion

Choose one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill in the blanks in the way that best completes the text.

Experts believe that humans have 10 trillion cells in their bodies, which (i) _____ a number of essential genetic elements; scientists often marvel at what incredible (ii) _____ would ensue should the cells become jumbled or misunderstand their purpose.

Blank (i)

Blank (ii)

| |
|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> (A) govern |
| <input type="radio"/> (B) organize |
| <input type="radio"/> (C) dislocate |

| |
|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> (D) order |
| <input type="radio"/> (E) method |
| <input type="radio"/> (F) chaos |

Quantitative

The Quantitative sections of the GRE General Test include the following question types.

- Quantitative Comparison
- Multiple-choice—Select One Answer
- Multiple-choice—Select One or More Answers
- Numeric Entry

In each Quantitative section, the Quantitative Comparison questions always come first. The other question types do not appear in any predetermined order, nor is there any set number of each question type on every GRE General Test. The Multiple-choice and Numeric Entry questions may appear as discrete (stand-alone) items, or they may be part of a set of questions based on the data in a table, chart, or other graphic. You should take as many practice tests as you can in order to become familiar with the format of the GRE Quantitative section.

Strategies specific to each of the question types outlined here can be found in [Chapter 7](#), “GRE

Quantitative.”

Quantitative Comparison

Compare Quantity A and Quantity B and select:

- (A) if Quantity A is greater
 - (B) if Quantity B is greater
 - (C) if the two quantities are equal
 - (D) if the relationship cannot be determined from the information given
- | Quantity A | Quantity B |
|------------|------------|
| $-(3)^4$ | $(-3)^4$ |

NOTE

Some Quantitative Comparison questions provide additional information centered between two columns. This information will help you to compare the two quantities. Refer to [Chapter 7](#), “GRE Quantitative,” for more details.

Multiple-choice—Select One Answer

For multiple-choice questions, unless you are directed otherwise, you should select a single answer choice.

1. When jogging, a runner takes 24 complete steps in 10 seconds. At this rate, approximately how many complete steps does the runner take in 144 seconds?

- (A) 34
- (B) 104
- (C) 154
- (D) 240
- (E) 346

Multiple-choice—Select One or More Answers

For this kind of multiple-choice question, the directions will tell you to choose all answers that apply. If the question specifies how many answer choices to select, select exactly that number of choices.

2. Which two of the following integers have a product less than -80 ?

- (A) -11
- (B) -10
- (C) -3
- (D) 8

Numeric Entry

For the following question, write your answer in the box.

Solve the equation for x : $2(x - 3) + 9 = 4x - 7$

$x =$

More on the Computer-based Test

The computer-based GRE is partially computer-adaptive, which means that when you complete the first Verbal or first Quantitative section, the computer may give you a more difficult second Verbal or Quantitative section, depending on how well you performed on the first section. This process allows for a more accurate assessment of your individual ability level in a given subject area.

Within each section, you do not have to answer the questions in the order in which they are presented, and you do not have to confirm an answer in order to move to the next question. You are free to skip questions, and you do not have to answer every question in the section. If you have time, you can return to questions you skipped or weren't sure about, and you can change an answer you decide is incorrect. However, once time runs out for a section, you cannot return to that section later.

Only minimal computer skills are required to take the GRE. We suggest that you familiarize yourself with the computer adaptive system by downloading the free POWERPREP® software available at www.gre.org. Review the tutorials and testing tools prior to test day so that you know how the process works.

What's Next?

[Chapter 2](#), "Taking the GRE," includes information on how to register for the GRE, what to expect at the testing center, and how the GRE is scored. We also provide a review of the policies governing test takers with disabilities.

2

Taking the GRE

CHAPTER GOALS

- Get information about registering for the GRE.
- Find out what rules you must follow at the testing center.
- Learn how each part of the test is scored.

As mentioned in [Chapter 1](#), the GRE General Test is designed to help graduate school admission departments assess applicants. GRE scores are used to augment undergraduate records and transcripts and to provide a standard of measure for comparing all applicants.

The first step in taking the GRE is to register for an appropriate test date and location. If you are an international student, please also read the Welcome Section at the start of this book.

Registering for the GRE General Test

You can register for the GRE on the Internet, by telephone, or by U.S. mail. You will schedule your GRE test on a first-come, first-served basis at a testing location near you. The test is offered throughout the year at many locations around the United States. The GRE is also given in many countries worldwide. The full list of locations, and other registration details, can be found online at www.ets.org.

You can register via telephone by calling 1-800-GRE-CALL (1-800-473-2255). Registrations sent by mail can take up to four weeks to process. You must send the appropriate forms, either those printed directly from the GRE website or those found in the GRE Bulletin. The latter is available at many college counseling offices, as well as online. After you register, you will receive both detailed information about your testing center and free test prep materials, including the POWERPREP software mentioned previously.

As of the printing of this book, you can take one GRE per calendar month. In addition, you can take a maximum of five GRE tests within any 12-month period. When you send your GRE scores to graduate schools, they see all scores from all GRE tests that you have taken within the past five years. You cannot choose to reveal scores only from a certain test date. How schools treat multiple-test scores varies. Some use only your most recent score, while others average the scores of each of your tests. Contact the admissions department of the programs to which you are applying for more information.

Taking the GRE General Test

One of the reasons the GRE is a useful tool for admissions departments is that it is a standardized test administered in the same way to all test-takers. In order to maintain this level of standardization, the administration of the GRE is governed by some very specific rules, including, but not limited to, the following:

- You must have acceptable and valid ID; if you do not, you will not be admitted into the test center.
- You must use exactly the name that appears on your primary ID to register for the GRE and gain admittance to the test center.
- You must adhere to test center personnel requirements; failure to do so could result in expulsion from the test center.
- You cannot bring personal items such as cell phones, pagers, cameras, calculators, and the like.
- You must sign the confidentiality statement at the test center.

NOTE

The rules governing the computer-based GRE are different from those governing the paper-based test. Visit www.ets.org for more information on the test administration process.

Scoring the GRE General Test

On the GRE General Test, you will receive separate scores for Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, and Quantitative Reasoning. The scores are calculated as follows.

Each essay receives a score from two highly trained readers using a 6-point holistic scale. This means that the readers are trained to assign a score based on the overall quality of an essay in response to a specific task. If the two scores differ by more than one point on the scale, a third reader steps in to resolve the discrepancy. In this case, the first two scores are dropped and the score given by the third reader is used. Otherwise, the scores from the two readers are averaged so that a single score from 0 to 6 (in half-point increments) is reported. If no essay response is given, a No Score (NS) is reported for this section. If an essay response is provided for one of the two writing tasks, the task for which no response is written receives a score of zero. Scoring guidelines are provided in [Chapter 6](#), “GRE Analytical Writing.” Your actual essays will also be reviewed by the Essay-Similarity-Detection software at Educational Testing Service (ETS) to ensure that your work is original.

Scoring the General Test Verbal and Quantitative Sections

Your scores on these two portions of the test will depend on your specific performance on the questions given as well as the number of questions answered correctly in the allotted time. First, for each measure, a raw score is computed based on the number of questions answered correctly. Then, using statistical methods, each raw score is converted to a scaled score that takes account of small differences between test forms. For the computer-based test, the conversion process also takes account of the fact that the test is partially adaptive; that is, depending how well you perform on the first Verbal and first Quantitative question, the computer may give you a second Verbal or Quantitative question that is more difficult. The purpose of statistically generating a scaled score is to make sure that scores achieved by test-takers on one GE test form are comparable to the same scores achieved on other GRE test forms. The Verbal and Quantitative scores are each reported on a 130–170 score scale in 1 point increments. If you answer no questions at all in either section, a No Score (NS) is reported.

A Note on Scoring the Practice Exams in This Book

Because actual GRE tests are scored using scales that are unique to each test form, this book only includes a guideline for interpreting scores on the simulated practice tests. As you work through this book, you should take additional practice exams with the official POWERPREP® software. It contains the same scoring “engine” as the real GRE exam and can give you a very good idea of how you should expect to do on test day. At this stage, and throughout most of your practice, you should not worry excessively about your test scores; your goal should be to learn something from every practice experience and to become familiar with the format and types of questions on the GRE.

What Your Scores Mean to Schools

You can select up to four institutions to receive your score report. Generally, score reports will be sent to you and the institutions selected 10 to 15 days after you complete the test. Most graduate programs elect to use GRE scores as an admissions tool because GRE scores are a reliable measure of an individual’s capacity to perform at the graduate level, and because GRE scores provide a consistent means by which to evaluate applicants. Admissions professionals also take into account an applicant’s grade point average, personal interviews, and letters of recommendation. However, because each of these methods of evaluation is variable and subjective, admissions departments need a standardized tool to provide a more objective measure of academic success.

Test-Takers with Disabilities

ETS provides additional information for test-takers with disabilities that includes guidelines for documenting disabilities, suggestions for test-takers, and the necessary forms required to obtain special accommodations. For test-takers with documented disabilities, these accommodations might include the following:

- Additional or extended testing time and breaks
- Allowance of medical devices in the testing center and special computer equipment
- A reader, a sign language interpreter, and recording devices

Accommodation requests must be made in advance and by following the guidelines set forth in *The Bulletin Supplement for Test Takers with Disabilities*, available as a download on www.ets.org. Documentation review could take several weeks, so be sure to submit all of the required forms and information at least two months prior to your desired test date.

What's Next?

The Diagnostic Test in [Chapter 3](#) should be your next step. It will help you to focus on areas of strength and weakness in your knowledge base and skill set. After you've assessed your current readiness for the GRE, focus on the remaining chapters in this book to maximize your GRE score.

Preparing for the GRE General Test

[CHAPTER 3 GRE DIAGNOSTIC TEST](#)

[CHAPTER 4 GRE GENERAL TESTING STRATEGIES](#)

[CHAPTER 5 INTRODUCTION TO GRE LOGIC](#)

[CHAPTER 6 GRE ANALYTICAL WRITING](#)

[CHAPTER 7 GRE QUANTITATIVE](#)

[CHAPTER 8 GRE VERBAL](#)

3

GRE Diagnostic Test

CHAPTER GOALS

- Take a simulated full-length GRE under actual test conditions.
- Check your results using the Answer Key.
- Review the explanations for each question, particularly those for questions you answered incorrectly or did not answer at all.
- Use the results to plan your GRE preparation program, focusing on areas you need to improve.

This diagnostic test can assist you in evaluating your current readiness for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Sample questions representing each section of the GRE are included to help you pinpoint areas of strength and weakness in your knowledge base and your skill set. Don't worry if you are unable to answer many or most of the questions at this point. The rest of this book contains information and resources to help you to maximize your GRE score.

We suggest that you make this diagnostic test as much like the real test as possible. Find a quiet location, free from distractions, and make sure that you have pencils and a timepiece. The simulated GRE in this chapter consists of five sections: one Analytical Writing task (in two parts), two Verbal Reasoning sections, and two Quantitative Reasoning sections, each with 20 questions. You should allow approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes to complete the entire test. The test sections should be completed in the time indicated at the beginning of each section and in the order in which the sections appear. You may skip around within a section, but complete each section before you move on to the next one. Within each section there are several different types of questions. Make sure that you read and understand all directions before you begin.

- Circle your answers on the test so that you can compare your answers to the correct answers listed in the Answer Key on page 61.
- When asked to select a sentence in a passage that meets a certain description, circle or underline the

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