



SECTION 5

TEST III (WRITING) SAMPLE CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT

This section of the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators® (GACE™) Preparation Guide is designed to assist you in responding to the constructed-response assignment on the test. Included in this section are:

- ▶ Constructed-response assignment directions
- ▶ A sample constructed-response assignment
- ▶ Assignment response sheets
- ▶ An example of a strong response to the sample assignment
- ▶ Scoring criteria that will be used in evaluating your response to the assignment

For the sample assignment, you may want to take the following steps to prepare for the test:

- Review the constructed-response assignment directions.
- Print the assignment and the assignment response sheet.
- Use scrap paper to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response.
- Use the assignment response sheet to record your response. The assignment response sheet reflects the amount of space available on an actual test.
- After you complete the assignment, review the sample strong response, your response, and the scoring criteria.

CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT DIRECTIONS

A sample of the directions for the constructed-response assignment is shown in the box below.

CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT DIRECTIONS

For the constructed-response assignment in this section, you are to prepare a written response and record it on the pages provided in Written Response Booklet B.

Read the assignment carefully before you begin to write. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write. You may use any blank space provided in this test booklet following the assignment to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. ***However, your final response must be written on the lined pages in Written Response Booklet B.***

Your response will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Appropriateness:** The extent to which the response addresses the topic and uses language and style appropriate for the specified audience, purpose, and occasion
- **Focus and Organization:** The extent to which the response states and maintains the thesis statement by using organizational strategies to enhance meaning and clarity
- **Support:** The extent to which the response provides reasoned support and specific examples to develop the thesis
- **Grammar, Sentence Structure, and Usage:** The extent to which the response uses appropriate grammar, effective sentence structure, and precise usage
- **Conventions:** The extent to which the response demonstrates the ability to spell common words and to use the conventions of capitalization and punctuation accurately

Your response will be evaluated based on your demonstrated ability to express and support opinions, not on the nature or content of the opinions expressed. The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of Standard American English. Your response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topic and use multiple paragraphs. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review what you have written and make any changes that you think will improve your response.

To maintain your anonymity during the scoring process, do not write your name on any portion of the written response booklet.

Please turn the page and begin the constructed-response assignment section of the test.

CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT ONE

■ Sample Constructed-Response Assignment One

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

It has been said that maturity requires distinguishing what is important from what is not. Write an essay, to be read by a college instructor, in which you describe something (e.g., idea, object, event, personal trait, goal) that you once thought was important and explain why, after maturing, you no longer thought that it was important. Your purpose is to describe something that you once thought was important and explain why it no longer seems important, using specific examples.

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■ Assignment Response Sheet for Sample Constructed-Response Assignment One

A large rectangular box containing 25 horizontal lines for writing a response.

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A large rectangular box containing 25 horizontal lines for writing.

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Section 5: Test III (Writing) Sample Constructed-Response Assignment

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Section 5: Test III (Writing) Sample Constructed-Response Assignment

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END OF ASSIGNMENT

■ Strong Response to Sample Constructed-Response Assignment One

Many people are familiar with the phrase "To thine own self be true," but fewer people actually follow this advice. In our society, there is a great deal of pressure to conform. As a child and teenager, I succumbed to this pressure and went to great lengths to look and act like the people around me, even if I made myself unhappy in the process. Only later did I realize that it was more important to be true to myself, and that by doing so I actually made other people happier. To me, achieving this understanding is a sign of true maturity.

When I was a child and young adult, my family relocated frequently. In every new hometown and school, I was introduced to a new idea of what being "cool" meant. In one town, being cool meant wearing only designer clothes, having one's hair perfectly styled, and attending all the high school football games; in another town, coolness was defined by draping oneself in colorful fabrics from Asia and Africa, participating in the arts, and attending lectures and poetry readings. Once I had determined which images and opinions met with approval in my new surroundings, I would immediately set out to acquire all of the right possessions and attitudes to be accepted. This often meant getting rid of my old toys, clothes, and

even friends. Although I was reluctant to part with these cherished objects and people, and I felt guilty afterward, I ultimately decided that the losses were necessary if I wanted to succeed in each new environment.

By the time I got to college, I had reinvented myself so many times that I no longer knew who I was. I couldn't decide on a major or even which classes to take and clubs to join, because I had so many competing beliefs and values in my head. While people around me were eagerly getting involved in activities and forming friendships, I floundered, trying to decide who I wanted to be: a passionate Women's Studies major who volunteered at a homeless shelter in her free time, a cerebral Public Policy major running for student body president and working toward acceptance into the top law schools, an exotic Anthropology major who spent a year studying and documenting the oral traditions of a small village in Outer Mongolia I had no idea what I really wanted. I finally realized how confused and unhappy I had made myself through my repeated attempts to adapt to other people's standards. So, I decided to focus my effort on re-establishing and asserting myself. I stopped listening to everybody else's opinions and learned to listen to myself instead. Once I did this, I discovered that I really liked myself. I also

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started making friends with people who liked me for who I was, not for who they wanted me to be. Because these friendships were based on honest, genuine connections, they have proven to be both lasting and dear to me.

Today, when I walk through a crowd where everyone seems to be wearing the latest identical fashions and communicating on the most cutting-edge technology, I take pride in the fact that I don't look and act like everybody around me. They all seem so hurried and stressed, while I can walk slowly, enjoy the scenery, and spend some quality time with my friends or my new, more mature self.

CRITERIA FOR SCORING YOUR RESPONSE

Your response will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

APPROPRIATENESS	The extent to which the response addresses the topic and uses language and style appropriate for the specified audience, purpose, and occasion
FOCUS AND ORGANIZATION	The extent to which the response states and maintains the thesis statement by using organizational strategies to enhance meaning and clarity
SUPPORT	The extent to which the response provides reasoned support and specific examples to develop the thesis
GRAMMAR, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, AND USAGE	The extent to which the response uses appropriate grammar, effective sentence structure, and precise usage
CONVENTIONS	The extent to which the response demonstrates the ability to spell common words and to use the conventions of capitalization and punctuation accurately

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Your response is rated on a four-point scale. The four score points of the score scale correspond to varying degrees of performance that are related to the criteria on the previous page.

Score	Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects thorough understanding and strong command of written performance as defined in relevant GACE framework objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response fully addresses the topic and uses appropriate language and style. • The thesis statement is clearly expressed, and focus and clarity are effectively maintained by using organizational strategies that enhance meaning. • Support is substantial, well-reasoned, relevant, and specific. • The writer shows mastery of grammar, effective sentence structure, and precise usage. • There are few, if any, errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects general understanding and command of written performance as defined in relevant GACE framework objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response addresses the topic and uses generally appropriate language and style. • The thesis statement is expressed, and focus and clarity are generally maintained by using organizational strategies that convey meaning. • Support is general, but reasoned and mostly relevant. • The writer shows a general understanding of grammar; minor errors in sentence structure and usage may appear, but they do not impede meaning. • Minor errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization may occur, but they do not impede meaning.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects partial understanding and limited command of written performance as defined in relevant GACE framework objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response partially addresses the topic and may use inappropriate language and style. • A thesis statement may be expressed, but focus and clarity are only partially maintained by using ineffective or illogical organizational strategies that may impede meaning. • Support may be incomplete, partially reasoned, redundant, or irrelevant. • The writer shows limited understanding of grammar; poorly structured sentences and imprecise usage may impede meaning. • Many errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization occur and may impede meaning.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects little or no understanding or command of written performance as defined in relevant GACE framework objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response attempts to address the topic, but language and style may be inappropriate. • Although the writer may mention a thesis statement, focus and clarity are largely obscured by a lack of organizational strategies. • Support, if present, is deficient, irrelevant, and/or confused. • The writer shows poor understanding of grammar; errors in sentence structure and usage may be so serious and numerous that they impede meaning. • Numerous errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization often impede meaning.

Please note: A response that is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, not primarily in the target language, or lacking a sufficient amount of original work to score will be considered **unscorable**. If there is no response to the assignment, then the response will be considered **blank**.