

Overview of the GED Tests

Background

The GED Tests provide adults with an opportunity to earn a high school diploma. Each year, more than 800,000 adults take the GED Tests. The GED Tests are available in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, many U.S. territories, and most Canadian provinces.

The GED Tests began as a way for service men and women returning from World War II to demonstrate that they had the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and higher education. Since its' beginning in 1942, there have been major changes to the test. The 2002 Series GED Tests have been revised to ensure that the skills measured represent the major academic skills and knowledge that are usually gained during four years of high school.

The GED is developed and administered by the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS). The GEDTS is part of the American Council on Education, a comprehensive association for the nation's colleges and universities dedicated to education issues and advocacy on behalf of quality higher education and adult education programs

Test Format

There are five subject area tests on the GED Test battery.

GED 2002 Series Tests

Test	Length (in minutes)	Number of Questions
Language Arts, Writing	120	50 + Essay
Language Arts, Reading	65	40
Social Studies	70	50
Science	80	50
Mathematics	90	50
Total	425	50

Candidates are assessed on their knowledge of broad concepts as well as their ability to use knowledge, information, and skills to solve problems. The GED Tests include questions that assess the ability to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information. Graphic literacy is an important aspect of the GED Tests. Color is used to enhance the clarity and readability of graphics that are incorporated into the test.

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The GED Credential

Today, more than ever before, employers and higher education institutions accept the GED credential. Approximately 93% of all colleges and universities accept the GED credential or an official score report in place of a high school diploma or transcript. In addition, recent studies have shown that the GED graduate performs as well as the regular high school graduate in higher education and training.

Language and Special Editions and Accommodations

GED Tests are available in Spanish. The Spanish editions are developed from specifications similar to those used for the English editions. However, emphasis within content areas is altered where appropriate (e.g., in the *Language Arts, Writing Test*) to reflect differences between the English and Spanish languages. Reading selections on the Spanish GED Tests reflect the cultural diversity of Hispanic adults.

To ensure that adults with disabilities also have an opportunity to obtain a high school credential through the GED Testing program, the GEDTS has developed special editions for adults with disabilities. The 2002 Series GED Tests are provided in Braille, large print, and on audiocassette.

In addition to special editions provided for adults with disabilities, procedures have been established for adults to obtain special accommodations for the GED Tests. Accommodations are provided for adults with physical, emotional, and learning disabilities that may interfere with their ability to take the test under standard testing conditions. Individuals who may benefit from special accommodations are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities available to them through the GED Testing program.