

See a Perfect Scoring GED® Test Extended Response

Getting ready to take the GED® test? Use this guide to prepare for the extended responses that you'll be writing on the Reasoning Through Language Arts and Social Studies test subjects. **Take a look at a perfect scoring sample extended response and see the explanations why it received a perfect score.**

When you're done reviewing the response, download instructions and passages to practice your own extended response.

Extended Response Instructions:

Analyze the arguments presented in the press release and the letter to the editor. In your response, develop an argument in which you explain how one position is better supported than the other. Incorporate relevant and specific evidence from both sources to support your argument.

Remember, the better-argued position is not necessarily the position with which you agree. This task should take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

[Download the passages analyzed in this response and practice your own response.](#)

Sample Response:

Both the press release and the letter to the editor offer positions that are supported by both fact and opinion. The press release seeks to exhort the new bill for expansion of Highway 17, while the letter argues that the passing of the bill could prove detrimental to the district. While both sides make an acceptable case, the latter provides a stronger argument.

One example of the letter's stronger argument is the explanation that federal tax dollars pay for the road, as it will incorporate six different states, therefore eliminating this particular state's ability to strike the bill down. This proves, with factual information, that the district did not have a fair say in the bill. The notion that few residents will use the road that their tax dollars are providing is an opinion. However, a resident and small-business owner in the town is

more credible in the awareness of the town's concern, as compared to a representative who attended a few meetings in the town hall.

Another example of the better supported argument in the letter is the reference to the construction jobs as temporary. The press release praises the new jobs created by the highway construction, as this is a valid point. However, the author of the letter is correct in the fact that the jobs will not create a boom in the district's economy, or fill in the gap caused by the closures in the manufacturing plants, as the press release leads listeners to believe. The road construction does not solve the long-term issue of unemployment in the town. In addition, the author of the letter counters the argument that new motels, restaurants, and gas stations along the highway will create permanent jobs for the residents of the town. She explains that, "...only minimum wage jobs will remain." This is a valid argument also, as unemployed residents that need enough income to support a household would not be much better off. Providing restaurant or motel jobs is very unlikely to feed or support an entire family. It will not pick up the laid-off employees of the manufacturing plants, who may have worked for many years towards promotions and a pension.

Another example of the letter's stronger argument is the author's explanation of the 2001 study. She concedes that the representative is correct in citing that bypasses are proven to reduce noise and traffic in town, but she argues that the study shows a negative effect on local businesses. This piece of the study was not mentioned by Representative Walls or the press release, and it is a proven fact. This draws more credibility to the argument in the letter. Also, although it is a speculation, it is more reasonable that travelers will stick to the main highway and not venture miles off their path into small town when chain gas stations, restaurants, and motels are conveniently located directly at the highway exits. It is less likely that old roads in the towns will become historical locations, attracting tourists and boosting small business sales.

Despite the argument and evidence given by the press release, it appears that the letter to the editor offers a stronger case. The author's ideas are backed up by logical explanations and facts with a few speculations. Though the press release offers some fact, it is mainly specked with anticipations and hopes, driven to overshadow any doubts and quell any concerns. The letter is penned by a resident of the town and owner of a business, subject to first-hand opinions of the citizens of the district. The press release is pushed by an elected representative who, upon visiting the town a number of times and consulting a small percentage of the constituents, is convinced she understands the majority. Although both parties may very well have the best interests of the district in mind, and either position could be correct, it is clear that the letter provides a better-supported argument.

Why did this response earn a perfect score?

The writer developed an argument using evidence from the passages as support

- The writer clearly stated his/her argument - *“the letter provides a better-supported argument.”* (pg. 2)
- The writer uses specific details from the text to decide which passage is more credible - *“a resident...is more credible...as compared to a representative.”* (pg. 1)
- The writer supports his/her argument by showing how one passage has “factual information” to strengthen the arguments - *“...correct in the fact [and] ...backed by logical explanations and facts with a few speculations.”* (pg. 2)
- The writer points out how the opposing point of view is not supported and counters weak points of the opposing point of view with facts - *“...mainly specked with anticipation and hopes”; “...the author of the letter counters the argument.”* (pg. 2)

The writer develops his/her ideas in an organized way

- The writer begins with an introduction to the topic that clearly expresses his/her argument and develops that argument logically over the following paragraphs.
- Each paragraph begins with a transition, helping to keep a logical flow to the response - *“One example...”, “Another example...”* (pg. 1, 2)
- Each paragraph includes evaluation and analysis of specific points from the two passages - *“She concedes...but she argues”.* (pg. 2)
- The writer concludes by restating his/her argument within an analysis of the credibility of each text.
- The writer maintains a formal style and appropriate tone throughout.

The writer follows the rules of the English Language

- The writer uses correct sentence structure and a variety of sentence structures.
- The writer’s language makes his/her response clear and easy to understand.
- The writer follows the standard rules of the English language.
- The writer avoids wordiness and awkward sentences for the most part.
- The writer uses punctuation appropriately and demonstrates mastery of mechanics.
- Overall, the response is at an appropriate level for on-demand draft writing.