

## Argument Task

The GRE Writing Assessment consists of two writing tasks, one of which is a 30-minute "Analyze an Argument" task.

The "**Argument**" task presents a different challenge: it requires test takers to critique an argument by discussing how well reasoned they find it. Test takers are asked to consider the logical soundness of the argument rather than agree or disagree with the position it presents.

### GRE Essay Scoring Guide: Analysis of an Argument

#### SCORE 6

A 6 paper presents a cogent, *well-articulated critique* of the argument and demonstrates *mastery* of the elements of effective writing. A typical paper in this category

- clearly identifies important features of the argument and analyzes them insightfully
- develops ideas cogently, organizes them logically, and connects them with clear transitions
- effectively supports the main points of the critique
- demonstrates control of language, including diction and syntactic variety
- demonstrates facility with the conventions of standard written English but may have minor flaws

See an [example](#) of an argument essay that earns a score of 6.

#### SCORE 5

A 5 paper presents a *well-developed critique* of the argument and demonstrates *good control* of the elements of effective writing. A typical paper in this category

- clearly identifies important features of the argument and analyzes them in a generally thoughtful way
- develops ideas clearly, organizes them logically, and connects them with appropriate transitions
- sensibly supports the main points of the critique
- demonstrates control of language, including diction and syntactic variety
- demonstrates facility with the conventions of standard written English but may have

occasional flaws

See an [example](#) of an argument essay that earns a score of 5.

#### SCORE 4

A 4 paper presents a *competent critique* of the argument and demonstrates *adequate control* of the elements of writing. A typical paper in this category

- identifies and analyzes important features of the argument
- develops and organizes ideas satisfactorily but may not connect them with transitions
- supports the main points of the critique
- demonstrates sufficient control of language to convey ideas with reasonable clarity
- generally follows the conventions of standard written English but may have flaws

See an [example](#) of an argument essay that earns a score of 4.

#### SCORE 3

A 3 paper demonstrates *some competence* in its analysis of the argument and in its control of the elements of writing but is *plainly flawed*. A typical paper in this category exhibits **one or more** of the following characteristics:

- does not identify or analyze most of the important features of the argument, although some analysis of the argument is present
- mainly analyzes tangential or irrelevant matters, or reasons poorly
- is limited in the logical development and organization of ideas
- offers support of little relevance and value for points of the critique
- does not convey meaning clearly
- contains occasional major errors or frequent minor errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

See an [example](#) of an argument essay that earns a score of 3.

#### SCORE 2

A 2 paper demonstrates *serious weaknesses* in analytical writing skills. A typical paper in this category exhibits **one or more** of the following characteristics:

- does not present a critique based on logical analysis, but may instead present the writer's own views on the subject
- does not develop ideas, or is disorganized and illogical

- provides little, if any, relevant or reasonable support
- has serious and frequent problems in the use of language and in sentence structure
- contains numerous errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that interfere with meaning

See an [example](#) of an argument essay that earns a score of 2.

### SCORE 1

A 1 paper demonstrates *fundamental deficiencies* in analytical writing skills. A typical paper in this category exhibits ***more than one*** of the following characteristics:

- provides little evidence of the ability to understand and analyze the argument
- provides little evidence of the ability to develop an organized response
- has severe and persistent errors in language and sentence structure
- contains a pervasive pattern of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that results in incoherence

See an [example](#) of an argument essay that earns a score of 1.

### SCORE 0

- Off topic, in a foreign language, merely copies the topic, consists only of keystroke characters, or is illegible, blank, or nonverbal.