

Issue Task

The GRE Writing Assessment consists of two writing tasks, one of which is a 45-minute "Present Your Perspective on an Issue" task.

The "**Issue**" task states an opinion on an issue of broad interest and asks test takers to address the issue from any perspective(s) they wish, so long as they provide relevant reasons and examples to explain and support their views.

GRE Essay Scoring Guide: Perspectives on an Issue

SCORE 6

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

- develops a position on the issue with insightful reasons and/or persuasive examples
- sustains a well-focused, well-organized discussion
- expresses ideas clearly and precisely
- uses language fluently, with varied sentence structure and effective vocabulary
- demonstrates superior facility with the conventions (grammar, usage, and mechanics) of standard written English but may have minor flaws

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

SCORE 5

A 5 paper presents a *well-developed analysis* of the complexities of the issue and demonstrates a *strong control* of the elements of effective writing. A typical paper in this category

- develops a position on the issue with well-chosen reasons and/or examples
- is focused and generally well organized
- expresses ideas clearly and well
- uses varied sentence structure and appropriate vocabulary
- demonstrates facility with the conventions of standard written English but may have minor flaws

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

SCORE 4

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

- develops a position on the issue with relevant reasons and/or examples
- is adequately organized
- expresses ideas clearly
- demonstrates adequate control of language but may lack sentence variety
- demonstrates control of the conventions of standard written English but may have some flaws

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

SCORE 3

A 3 paper demonstrates *some competence* in its analysis of the issue 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:

- is vague or limited in developing a position on the issue
- is weak in the use of relevant reasons or examples
- is poorly focused and/or poorly organized
- has problems expressing ideas clearly
- uses language imprecisely and/or lacks sentence variety
- contains occasional major errors or frequent minor errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

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

SCORE 2

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

- is unclear or seriously limited in developing a position on the issue
- provides few, if any, relevant reasons or examples
- is unfocused and/or disorganized
- has serious and frequent problems in the use of language and sentence structure
- contains numerous errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics that interfere with meaning

See an [example](#) of an issue 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 ***one or more*** of the following characteristics:

- provides little evidence of the ability to develop or organize a coherent response to the topic
- has severe and persistent errors in language and sentence structure
- contains a pervasive pattern of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that severely interferes with meaning

See an [example](#) of an issue 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.