

GRE VERBAL

@america, Feb 8 2020
With Christine Suwendy

COURSE CALENDAR

12/3: Intro to GRE Verbal:

Close Reading.

(with a deep focus on Reading Comprehension)

12/10: Reading Comprehension:

Question Types

(breakdown of RC question types)

12/17: Intro to **Analytical Writing:**

The Argument Essay and the Issue Essay

(the paragraph structure)

What is the point of Analytical Writing?

The GRE Verbal is a test of...

The **Analytical Writing** measure tests your critical thinking and **analytical writing** skills.

- It assesses your ability to read well to **find textual evidence** to support complex ideas
- It assesses your ability to construct and evaluate arguments
- It assesses your ability to **organize ideas**
- It assesses your ability to sustain a focused and coherent discussion.
- It does not assess specific content knowledge.

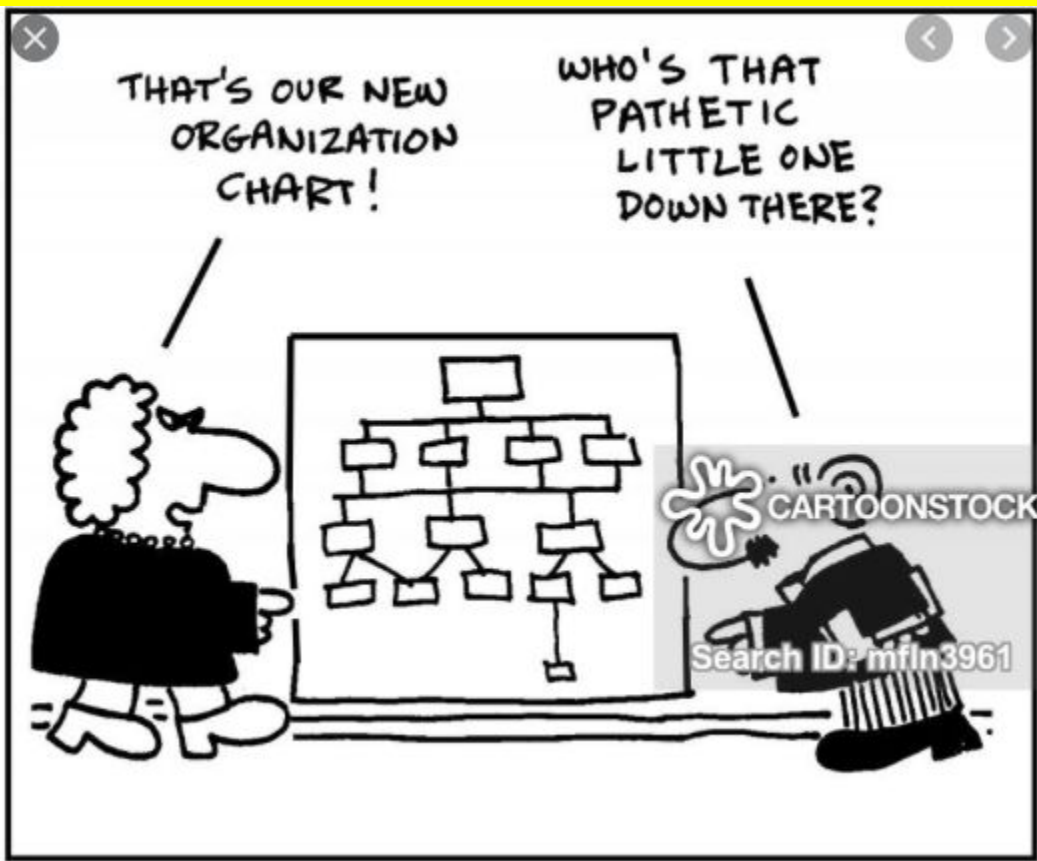
GRE Analytical Writing Sections

- a 30-minute "Analyze an Issue" task
- a 30-minute "Analyze an Argument" task

What this means in layman's language:

ISSUE: Construct a fluid, organized and balanced opinion on a topic (internet, environment, education, etc.)

ARGUMENT: Read closely to find loopholes in a short passage and organize an essay based on a well-organized deconstruction of the passage.



THAT'S OUR NEW
ORGANIZATION
CHART!

WHO'S THAT
PATHETIC
LITTLE ONE
DOWN THERE?

CARTOONSTOCK

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GOOD LUCK WITH
THE SECOND
SENTENCE

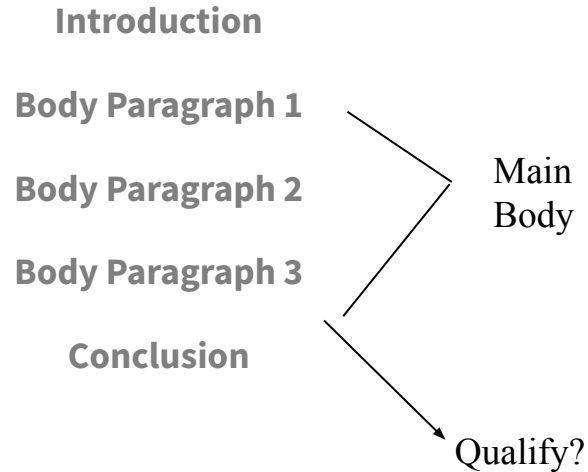


SCHULZ

Elements of the Good ARGUMENT Essay

READ WELL ORGANIZE WELL

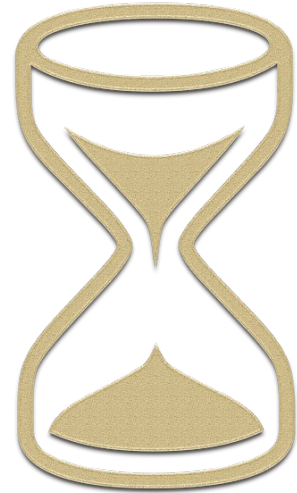
Classic Structure of an Academic Essay



Essay Structure:	Description:
1. Introduction	Write an introduction explaining in your own words what the issue is about. Try to generate interest in the topic. End your paragraph with a thesis statement
2. Main body	Write 3 paragraphs to support your position. Each paragraph should introduce one point, explain it , and try to give a specific example . Use transitions.
3. Qualification	Qualify (moderate) your position 80-20 i.e. but, however
4. Conclusion	Draw the essay back to your thesis. Avoid repetition of language. I repeat, avoid repeating. Find something general to say that makes it clear that you have finished.

An Example of the Structure of the Body Paragraph

- ❑ Topic statement (a statement of what your paragraph will take on)
- ❑ Textual evidence (quote from the passage, from the critic if you are working with a source text/secondary text)
- ❑ Analysis of textual evidence (tying it back to your paragraph's main point)
- ❑ Transition with signal word like “However,” “But,” in order to insert your own point of view
- ❑ Follow your own point of view with supporting evidence
- ❑ Zoom out, recap OR transition to the next paragraph



Example of a Body Paragraph

In his book on globalization, Bob Howard claims that globalization is a threat for the diversity of different nations and cultures. Howard writes that “when every place in the world becomes a replica of an American city, we can no longer learn from cultures truly different from our own.” However, Howard’s dismay might be exaggerated and inaccurate. For example, a city like Hong Kong is a good example of how the forces of globalization has created a hybrid culture: neither East nor West but a combination of the two. Globalization might bring a level of hegemony to the world, but it would be a stretch to say that the influence only goes in one direction.

-Is the topic statement at the beginning of the paragraph?

-Is there a piece of textual evidence that’s introduced into the paragraph?

-Is the textual evidence analyzed? Is there a good level of analysis overall?

-Does the paragraph keep to a discussion of the topic statement instead of veering off into a new topic?

-Is there a conclusion that recaps the point or expands the paragraph’s main point?

**The argument essay is about:
identifying**



the stated or unstated assumptions in the
passage

Argument Essay topic

In surveys Mason City residents rank water sports (swimming, boating and fishing) among their favorite recreational activities. The Mason River flowing through the city is rarely used for these pursuits, however, and the city park department devotes little of its budget to maintaining riverside recreational facilities. For years there have been complaints from residents about the quality of the river's water and the river's smell. In response, the state has recently announced plans to clean up Mason River. Use of the river for water sports is therefore sure to increase. The city government should for that reason devote more money in this year's budget to riverside recreational facilities.

Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on the assumptions and what the implications are if the assumptions prove unwarranted.

Argument Essay: Score 6 Example

While it may be true that the Mason City government ought to devote more money to riverside recreational facilities, this author's argument does not make a cogent case for increased resources based on river use. It is easy to understand why city residents would want a cleaner river, but this argument is rife with holes and assumptions, and thus, not strong enough to lead to increased funding.

Citing surveys of city residents, the author reports city resident's love of water sports. It is not clear, however, the scope and validity of that survey. For example, the survey could have asked residents if they prefer using the river for water sports or would like to see a hydroelectric dam built, which may have swayed residents toward river sports. The sample may not have been representative of city residents, asking only those residents who live upon the river. The survey may have been 10 pages long, with 2 questions dedicated to river sports. We just do not know. Unless the survey is fully representative, valid, and reliable, it can not be used to effectively back the author's argument.

Additionally, the author implies that residents do not use the river for swimming, boating, and fishing, despite their professed interest, because the water is polluted and smelly. While a polluted, smelly river would likely cut down on river sports, a concrete connection between the resident's lack of river use and the river's current state is not effectively made. Though there have been complaints, we do not know if there have been numerous complaints from a wide range of people, or perhaps from one or two individuals who made numerous complaints. To strengthen his/her argument, the author would benefit from implementing a normed survey asking a wide range of residents why they do not currently use the river.

continued...

Building upon the implication that residents do not use the river due to the quality of the river's water and the smell, the author suggests that a river clean up will result in increased river usage. If the river's water quality and smell result from problems which can be cleaned, this may be true. For example, if the decreased water quality and aroma is caused by pollution by factories along the river, this conceivably could be remedied. But if the quality and aroma results from the natural mineral deposits in the water or surrounding rock, this may not be true. There are some bodies of water which emit a strong smell of sulphur due to the geography of the area. This is not something likely to be affected by a clean-up. Consequently, a river clean up may have no impact upon river usage. Regardless of whether the river's quality is able to be improved or not, the author does not effectively show a connection between water quality and river usage.

A clean, beautiful, safe river often adds to a city's property values, leads to increased tourism and revenue from those who come to take advantage of the river, and a better overall quality of life for residents. For these reasons, city government may decide to invest in improving riverside recreational facilities. However, this author's argument is not likely significantly persuade the city government to allocate increased funding.

Directions

A recent survey of 250 adults between the ages of 30 and 45 showed an association between the number of hours adults spend online each day and self-reporting of symptoms commonly associated with depression. The survey found that adults who spend 30 hours or more online each week were twice as likely as others to report that they “frequently” had trouble concentrating. Of adults who reported spending more than 30 hours per week online, 20 percent also reported that they had felt “sad, down, or blue” at least three times within the past month.

These results suggest that spending too much time online is linked to depression and people who want to improve their well-being should strictly limit the time they spend online.

Write a response in which you discuss what questions would need to be answered in order to decide whether the recommendation and the argument on which it is based are reasonable. Be sure to explain how the answers to these questions would help to evaluate the recommendation.

Checklist:

- Does the essay have a clear topic statement?
- Do the body paragraphs essay manage to identify the passage's stated/unstated assumptions by engaging closely with the source text ?
- Are the body paragraphs well organized?
- Does each new point build upon the previous point?
- Is the argument nicely detailed instead of being too broad/general?

The issue essay is about:
Expressing and organizing
an intelligent and articulate point of view
on a certain topic



Steps 1 & 2: Take the Issue Apart, Select Your Points

Arts/Humanities should earn less than science/economics	Arts/humanities should NOT earn less than science/economics
<p data-bbox="421 336 913 390">Benefit to population more tangible for sci./econ. (health, tech., engineering, innov.)</p> <p data-bbox="421 443 971 521">Standard of living could ↑ for whole pop., not just those who are highly educated/interested in arts/hum. or who can afford such luxuries</p> <p data-bbox="421 574 933 680">Would encourage people to enter these fields; we already know it works to give econ. incentives to encourage certain behaviors (ex: tax law)</p> <p data-bbox="421 732 942 838">This would not elim. art, humanities: people will still be drawn to these jobs for pers. reasons despite low pay; individuals could still pay for art</p>	<p data-bbox="1006 319 1338 341">Potential for unfair outcomes:</p> <p data-bbox="1006 383 1522 461">Who is arbiter of value (gov't, market)? Would this policy be contrary to supply/demand (who intervenes to set pay)?</p> <p data-bbox="1006 503 1474 558">How to assess value? (Many would argue arts/culture more important to society)</p> <p data-bbox="1006 599 1508 678">How to pay comparable jobs in both art/hum. and sci./econ. sectors (teachers, support/admin. staff)?</p> <p data-bbox="1006 719 1532 798">Differing "value" of jobs within same field (all sci./econ. give equal benefit or sliding scale of value)?</p> <p data-bbox="1006 839 1450 861">If pay based on "value," how to enforce</p>

Typical Discussion Points for an Issue Essay

Tips for the GRE Issue Essay

- Write at least three practice essays. ...
- Choose a side
- Don't waffle. ...
- Choose very specific real-world examples. ...
- BUT, make sure your examples are relevant to the topic. ...
- Avoid first-person and self-reference. ...
- Make strong, declarative statements. ...
- Refute the opposing view in your conclusion.

Example of an Issue Essay Prompt

As people rely more and more on technology to solve problems, the ability of humans to think for themselves will surely deteriorate.

Discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

Sample Score 6 Issue Essay

The statement linking technology negatively with free thinking plays on recent human experience over the past century. Surely there has been no time in history where the lived lives of people have changed more dramatically. A quick reflection on a typical day reveals how technology has revolutionized the world. Most people commute to work in an automobile that runs on an internal combustion engine. During the workday, chances are high that the employee will interact with a computer that processes information on silicon bridges that are .09 microns wide. Upon leaving home, family members will be reached through wireless networks that utilize satellites orbiting the earth. Each of these common occurrences could have been inconceivable at the turn of the 19th century.

The statement attempts to bridge these dramatic changes to a reduction in the ability for humans to think for themselves. The assumption is that an increased reliance on technology negates the need for people to think creatively to solve previous quandaries. Looking back at the introduction, one could argue that without a car, computer, or mobile phone, the hypothetical worker would need to find alternate methods of transport, information processing and communication. Technology short circuits this thinking by making the problems obsolete.

Argument essay continued

However, this reliance on technology does not necessarily preclude the creativity that marks the human species. The prior examples reveal that technology allows for convenience. The car, computer and phone all release additional time for people to live more efficiently. This efficiency does not preclude the need for humans to think for themselves. In fact, technology frees humanity to not only tackle new problems, but may itself create new issues that did not exist without technology. For example, the proliferation of automobiles has introduced a need for fuel conservation on a global scale. With increasing energy demands from emerging markets, global warming becomes a concern inconceivable to the horse-and-buggy generation. Likewise dependence on oil has created nation-states that are not dependent on taxation, allowing ruling parties to oppress minority groups such as women. Solutions to these complex problems require the unfettered imaginations of maverick scientists and politicians.

In contrast to the statement, we can even see how technology frees the human imagination. Consider how the digital revolution and the advent of the internet has allowed for an unprecedented exchange of ideas. WebMD, a popular internet portal for medical information, permits patients to self research symptoms for a more informed doctor visit. This exercise opens pathways of thinking that were previously closed off to the medical layman. With increased interdisciplinary interactions, inspiration can arrive from the most surprising corners. Jeffrey Sachs, one of the architects of the UN Millenium Development Goals, based his ideas on emergency care triage techniques. The unlikely marriage of economics and medicine has healed tense, hyperinflation environments from South America to Eastern Europe.

Argument essay continued

This last example provides the most hope in how technology actually provides hope to the future of humanity. By increasing our reliance on technology, impossible goals can now be achieved. Consider how the late 20th century witnessed the complete elimination of smallpox. This disease had ravaged the human race since prehistorical days, and yet with the technology of vaccines, free thinking humans dared to imagine a world free of smallpox. Using technology, battle plans were drawn out, and smallpox was systematically targeted and eradicated.

Technology will always mark the human experience, from the discovery of fire to the implementation of nanotechnology. Given the history of the human race, there will be no limit to the number of problems, both new and old, for us to tackle. There is no need to retreat to a Luddite attitude to new things, but rather embrace a hopeful posture to the possibilities that technology provides for new avenues of human imagination.

**With the Issue essay:
Jangan lebay ;)**

Classroom Exercise

The best ideas arise from a passionate interest in commonplace things.

Discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement above and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how those considerations shape your position.

Sample Responses

Sample Paragraph 1 (Score 6)

The advent of Big Bang cosmology, which occurred in rudimentary form almost immediately upon Edwin Hubble's first observations at the Hooker telescope in California during the early 20th century, was the most significant advance in mankind's understanding of the universe in over 400 years. The seemingly simple fact that everything in the universe, on the very large scale, is moving away from everything else in fact betrays nearly all of our scientific knowledge of the origins and mechanics of the universe. This slight, one might even say commonplace, distortion of tint on a handful of photographic plates carried with it the greatest challenge to Man's general, often religiously reinforced, conception of the nature of the world to an extent not seen since the days of Galileo. Not even Charles Darwin's theory, though it created more of a stir than Big Bang cosmology, had such shattering implications for our conceptions of the nature of our reality. Yet it is not significant because it introduced the question of the nature of what lies beyond Man's grasp. A tremendous number of megalithic ruins, including the Pyramids both of Mexico and Egypt, Stonehenge, and others, indicate that this question has been foremost on humankind's collective mind since time immemorial. Big Bang cosmology is so incredibly significant in this line of reasoning exactly because of the degree to which it changed the direction of this generally held, constantly pondered, and very ancient train of thought.

Sample Responses

Sample Paragraph 2 (Score 5)

For example, let's consider some "idea" people in history. The person who invented the basketball hoop, or the game of volleyball, or ice skates, all had interest in those things before they had their brilliant ideas. I do know that the inventor of the basketball hoop used to coach a basketball team of young boys, and they would throw the ball into a fruit basket that was nailed to the wall. Obviously, a basket has a bottom to it, and they would have to fish it out after every successful throw. So he had the brilliant idea of cutting out the bottom of the basket. It seems so simple to us now, but nobody had ever played basketball like that in his day.

Sample Responses

Sample Paragraph 3 (score 4)

If the statement is viewed from the standpoint of all ideas from the beginning of civilization, then the statement holds true. Examples of commonplace things are food and shelter. If a person had an abundance of food and needed to transport it, they may have the idea to weave a basket or make some sort of tote in order to load more at once. With that idea, eventually the people would think of things to make the first idea more useful, such as adding wheels to your carrying device. With shelter, first people (Cro-Magnon) may have kept out of weather and unsafe territory by using caves as shelter. From passionate interest in the common shelter a person may have come up with brilliant ideas about structures, architecture, and construction.

CHECKLIST

- Are examples in the essay persuasive and fully developed?
- Is any line of reasoning logically sound and well supported?
- Are ideas in the essay connected logically?
- Are the body paragraphs well organized?
- Are there any exaggerated claims in the essay?

The best online resource for the GRE Analytical Writing:

<https://www.prepscholar.com/gre/blog/gre-essay-topics/>

<https://www.manhattanprep.com/gre/blog/gre-essay-tips/>

Thank you and good luck!

Remember our tips about (1) the conventions of academic writing (2) reading closely and (3) relying on CONTEXT!

