

# **GRE VERBAL**

**@america, Feb 8 2020**  
**With Christine Suwendy**

# COURSE CALENDAR

**1/11:** Intro to GRE Verbal:

**Close Reading.**

(with a deep focus on Reading  
Comprehension)

**1/25:** Intro to **Sentence Completion** and  
**Sentence Equivalence**

(with a deep focus on CONTEXT)

**2/1: Reading Comprehension: Question  
Types**

(breakdown of RC question types)

**2/8:** Intro to **Analytical Writing:**

The Argument Essay and the Issue Essay  
(AW essay types and formats)

**3/7:** Analytical Writing:

**The Paragraph Structure**

(mastering the paragraph structure as a hack)

**3/21:** VERBAL REASONING Review:

**Overview and Hacks**

(problem log review & summary )

How would you introduce yourself  
in 30 seconds?

**We are writing all the time in daily life:  
organizing thoughts, emphasizing points**

# What is the Issue Essay

## GRE Issue Prompt (Topic) and Sample Essay

The GRE Issue writing task is designed to test your ability **to communicate a position on an issue** effectively and persuasively. Your basic task is to analyze the issue presented, considering more than one perspective, and to develop and support your position on the issue. *There is no "correct" answer.*

# GRE Issue Essay

- ❑ Pick a side and go for it, don't waffle
- ❑ Choose a few real-world examples you can easily discuss (but make sure your examples are relevant to the topic)
- ❑ Observe the one paragraph-one point rule by making sure that your body paragraph unfolds the topic statement and nothing else
- ❑ Refute the opposing view in your conclusion
- ❑ Write a few practice essays

# SAMPLE GRE ISSUE ESSAY PROMPT

Some people believe that government regulation is needed in order to ensure the safety of consumer goods, while others believe that voluntary efforts of the producers of those goods suffice.

Write a response in which you discuss which view on the issue more closely aligns with your position and explain your reasoning. In developing and supporting your position, be sure to address both views expressed above.

**\*TIP: Don't just read the issue statement; read the instructions closely as well!**

The extent to which government should oversee the production of goods by the private sector is a complex issue involving a tug-of-war between the interests of public safety and free enterprise. On balance, however, I tend to agree that consumer safety is best left to the private sector, given the dubious effectiveness of government regulation and the proven tendency of our corporate culture to set its own safety standards irrespective of those set by government.

One compelling argument against such regulations is that they are costly to administer and enforce, and can even be counterproductive. Government regulatory agencies tend to be unwieldy bureaucracies; thus administrative delays can frustrate the purpose of regulations, particularly those designed to curb activities that pose an immediate threat to the public's safety or health. Moreover, the costs of administering and enforcing government regulations are passed on to the same taxpayer-citizens whom the regulations are designed to protect, thereby countervailing their value.

A second compelling argument against such regulations is that they are ineffectual when it comes to large corporations, which have the power and financial resources to undermine them. Specifically, in my observation the private sector tends to view potential civil and criminal penalties simply as business risks to be weighed against the potential profit accruing by violating the law. Two other responses to government regulation are common as well: circumventing them by relocating to places where it is legal to produce harmful products, and lobbying lawmakers to modify or repeal regulations that serve to reduce profitability.

Those who disagree with my view might argue that, left unfettered by regulation, private enterprises will naturally sacrifice product safety for profit — because the profit motive is what drives them. Thus absent product-safety regulations, the argument goes, consumers would find themselves in constant peril of injury, illness, and even death.

However, this argument overlooks the offsetting economic and social benefits of free enterprise. By maximizing profits, businesses provide jobs, stimulate the economy, and facilitate innovation and progress. The argument also ignores the fact that many corporations today actually go further than regulations require in ensuring that their products are safe. Many car manufacturers, for instance, design their automobiles to exceed government safety guidelines. Admittedly, such safety measures are probably born not of social conscience but of self-interest; after all, consumer-friendly products attract consumers and thus can enhance longer-term profits. Regardless of the motive, however, the empirical evidence is that businesses produce safe goods whether or not they are subject to government regulation.

In conclusion, I acknowledge that the private sector's profit motive is not about to yield to a collective social conscience any time soon. Nevertheless, given the ineffectiveness of government regulation and the economic benefits of a laissez-faire economic system, product-safety issues are best resolved by the producers of products — and ultimately by consumers who choose to buy or not buy them.



# Body Paragraph Checklist

- 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 Analytical Writing portion requires  
a mimicry of academic writing

# 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?

# Classroom Exercise

“Governments should focus on solving the immediate problems of today rather than on trying to solve the anticipated problems of the future.”

Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the recommendation and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, describe specific circumstances in which adopting the recommendation would or would not be advantageous and explain how these examples shape your position.

# **The best online resource for the GRE Analytical Writing:**

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

# Text Completion Review

- ❑ Try to UNDERSTAND WHAT THE SENTENCE IS SAYING in your own words
- ❑ IDENTIFY USEFUL INFORMATION: Every Text Completion question contains **clues** that point you to the right answer. The clues in the sentence will always support one and only one of the answer choices. That doesn't mean they need to be obvious! Part of solving Text Completion questions is figuring out what is a clue and what isn't.
- ❑ PAY ATTENTION TO TRANSITION WORDS: can you work out, using **transition words and other signals in the sentence**, how the blank relates to the clues?
- ❑ VOCABULARY AS UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT:
- ❑ Know the nuances of how VOCABULARY WORDS ARE USED IN CONTEXT

134. The American system of government is wonderfully responsive to crisis, but seemingly (i) \_\_\_\_\_ to perennial troubles, limping along with (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ solutions to (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ problems.

Blank (i)      Blank (ii)      Blank (iii)

empathetic	faddish	coarse
obliging	tendentious	chronic
indifferent	makeshift	acute

131. Even thrill-seeking visitors to amusement parks will avoid those attractions with a reputation for real (i) \_\_\_\_\_, like those at the now-shuttered Action Park. These patrons want not danger but its (ii) \_\_\_\_\_, a ride that (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ but is in fact perfectly safe.

Blank (i)      Blank (ii)      Blank (iii)

peril	complement	satisfies
titillation	simulacrum	mollifies
lavishness	abettor	terrifies

129. Though some judges have found in the Third Amendment to the US Constitution a (i) \_\_\_\_\_ for a right to privacy, it was drafted primarily to appease opponents of the Constitution, and was particularly a (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ to those antifederalists who sought to prevent the new state from maintaining a standing army. Since Article 1, section 8 of the Constitution explicitly grants to Congress the power to raise and maintain an army, the Third Amendment was largely (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ before it was written.

Blank (i)                      Blank (ii)    Blank (iii)

detriment	boon	daft
basis	sop	gauche
counterargument	bolster	moot



# Sentence Equivalence Review

## 1. Identify Pairs—But Beware!

You know that the two words you choose have to **create two sentences with approximately the same meaning**. This means that the two words you choose need to be synonyms—not necessarily close synonyms, but synonyms.

## 1. Eliminate “Outlier” Words

Similarly, since you know that the two words you choose have to have at least a somewhat similar meaning, if you find **any words in the list that don’t have any remote matches**, you know that they can’t be the right answer choice. So you can eliminate those.

## 1. Fill in the Blank Yourself

When you read the sentence, think about **what word(s) you might place in the blank to complete the sentence** in a way that makes sense. Then see if you can identify similar words among your choices.

# Sentence Equivalence Tips

## 4. Assess Word Positivity/Negativity

You can often tell from the context of the sentence **if a positive or negative word belongs in the blank**. This can help you eliminate words that you know don't have the correct valence, even if you aren't completely sure of the exact definition.

## 5. Use Signal Words

Certain words, especially transitions, can function as “signal words” in sentence equivalence questions. **They'll tell you something about what purpose different parts of the sentence serve.** This can help you infer what can best go in the blank. For example, if you see a word like “although,” you know that you're about to see a caveat or clarification. Words like “furthermore” and “indeed” mean that part of the sentence will offer further support or emphasis. “Instead” and “but” mean you're about to see a counterpoint or different perspective. If you can notice what transitions (and conjunctions like “and” and “but”) signal in sentences, you'll have a much easier time telling what words could belong in the blank for sentence completion.

5. The daily routine of responding to lobbyists and exchanging polemics with intransigent political opponents seemed at odds with the president's \_\_\_\_\_ tendencies.

- ☐ tenacious
- ☐ idealistic
- ☐ dialectical
- ☐ contentious
- ☐ quixotic
- ☐ altruistic

7. The exhibit is not so much a retrospective as a \_\_\_\_\_; the artist's weaker early work is glossed over, and any evidence of his ultimate dissolution is absent entirely.

- ☐ paean
- ☐ philippic
- ☐ tirade
- ☐ panacea
- ☐ eulogy
- ☐ crescendo

# Reading Comprehension Tips

- ❑ Read fast and read slow
- ❑ Try to identify the writer's perspective and how the information in the text relates to the writer's perspective (is he citing a point of view he is aligned with? A point of view he disagrees with?)
- ❑ Most of the time, it is safest to only answer the questions according to the information in the text (and nothing other than the information in the text)
- ❑ When you come across a long, complicated sentence, try to cut it down to its most simple form: subject-verb-object
- ❑ Read the questions as carefully as you read the passage

Henri Matisse's *The Ochre Head* represents the artist's exuberant display of his new mastery of a technique once **peculiar** to Picasso. Matisse has learned to artfully separate color and drawing. The painting depicts a head and shoulders, a bouquet of red flowers in a dark blue vase sitting upon a bench, a framed drawing of a woman's head, and an unframed painting or drawing, also of a woman. But what is most striking about the painting is the way Matisse has begun to allow his colors and his forms to play freely, even while they are coordinated. The ochre of the head runs out past the form. Bits of blue from the bench appear in the man's neckline or along his shoulder. The colors of the various frames and surfaces of the drawing on the wall overlap and refuse to be constrained by definite lines of form. Although this technique is not given the kind of free reign Picasso allows it in his Cubist period or in works such as *Minotaur*, it is still a stunning development for Matisse. And he seems aware of this fact. The painting's composition references Picasso's *Still Life with Ancient Head* from 1925, signaling Matisse's awareness that he is borrowing from his younger colleague.

40. The author uses the word *peculiar* to mean which of the following?

- (A) strange
- (B) abstract
- (C) unknown
- (D) unique
- (E) appealing

41. The main idea of the passage is to

- (A) describe an artistic work and its inspiration
- (B) describe how Matisse surpassed Picasso
- (C) describe how Matisse developed his style
- (D) describe a representative example of Matisse's work
- (E) describe the influence of Picasso on the art world

42. According to the passage, all of the following are true of *The Ochre Head* EXCEPT:

- (A) The artist did not color between the lines.
- (B) Its arrangement is similar to that of a piece by Picasso.
- (C) It is considered among the best of Matisse's work.
- (D) Its colors are more constrained than those of *Minotaur*.
- (E) It depicts household objects.

The term *free rider* originates from the idea of someone who rides public transportation without paying the fare. The *free rider problem* is what results when too many people do this: the transit system will go bankrupt. More broadly, the *free rider* is someone who uses or enjoys the benefits of something without paying, or takes more than his or her share of a public

5 good. *Free riders* can cause others to curtail their own contributions, not wanting to be taken advantage of.

In some cases, the *free rider problem* is viewed as a necessary cost of government. When citizens pay for national defense or environmental protection, everyone benefits, even those who evade paying taxes.

---

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

---

77. Which of the following examples matches the definition of a *free rider problem* as described in the passage?

- ☐ A skateboarder grabs onto the back of a car and is able to travel effortlessly for over a mile before letting go.
- ☐ A senior citizen pays less for a movie ticket than do the other people in the theater.
- ☐ A yearly school bake sale based on the honor system is suspended when too many people take food without paying.

Subatomic particles can be divided into two classes: fermions and bosons, terms coined by physicist Paul Dirac in honor of his peers Enrico Fermi and Satyendra Bose. Fermions, which include electrons, protons, and neutrons, obey the Pauli exclusion principle, according to which no two particles can inhabit the same fundamental state. For example, electrons cannot circle

5 the nuclei of atoms in precisely the same orbits, loosely speaking, and thus must occupy more and more distant locations, like a crowd filling seats in a stadium. The constituents of ordinary matter are fermions; indeed, the fact that fermions are in some sense mutually exclusive is the most salient reason why two things composed of ordinary matter cannot be in the same place at the same time.

Conversely, bosons, which include photons (particles of light) and the hitherto elusive Higgs boson, do not obey the Pauli principle and in fact tend to bunch together in exactly the same fundamental state, as in  
10 lasers, in which each photon proceeds in perfect lockstep with all the others. Interestingly, the seemingly stark division between fermionic and bosonic behavior can be bridged. All particles possess “spin,” a characteristic



vaguely analogous to that

of a spinning ball; boson spins are measured in integers, such as 0 and 1, while fermion spins are always half-integral, such as  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $1\frac{1}{2}$ . As a result, whenever an even number of fermions group together, that group of  
15 fermions, with its whole-number total spin, effectively becomes a giant boson. Within certain metals chilled to near absolute zero, for instance, so-called Cooper pairs of electrons form; these pairs flow in precise harmony and with zero resistance

through the metal, which is thus said to have achieved a superconductive condition. Similarly, helium-4 atoms  
20 (composed of 2 electrons, 2 protons, and 2 neutrons) can collectively display boson-like activity when cooled to a superfluid state. A swirl in a cup of superfluid helium will, amazingly, never dissipate.

The observation that even-numbered groups of fermions can behave like bosons raises  
the corollary question of whether groups of bosons can ever exhibit fermionic characteristics. Some scientists  
25 argue for the existence of skyrmions (after the theorist Tony Skyrme who first described the behavior of these hypothetical fermion-like groups of bosons) in superconductors and other condensed-matter environments, where twists in the structure of the medium might permit skyrmions to form.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

---

100. The example of “a crowd filling seats in a stadium” (line 6) is intended to

- ☐ expand upon one consequence of the Pauli exclusion principle
- ☐ illustrate a behavior of certain fermions
- ☐ describe how electrons circle the nuclei of atoms in concentric, evenly-spaced orbits

101. The author’s primary purpose in writing this passage is to

- (A) explain the mechanism by which fermions can become bosons
- (B) describe the two classes of subatomic particles
- (C) provide examples of the different forms of matter
- (D) explain the concept of particle “spin”
- (E) argue that most matter is composed of one type of particle

102. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a characteristic of bosons?

- (A) They can be composed of groups of fermions.
- (B) They are measured in integer spin.
- (C) They are the constituents of ordinary matter.
- (D) They tend to bunch together in the same fundamental state.
- (E) They lead to phenomena such as superconductors and superfluids.

103. Which of the following can be properly inferred from the passage?

- (A) An atom composed of two protons and a neutron would be considered a boson.
- (B) Skyrmions have been discovered in superconductors and other condensed matter environments.
- (C) Two electrons in an atom cannot circle the same nucleus at exactly the same distance.
- (D) A current through a superconducting wire will never dissipate.
- (E) Fermions cannot behave as bosons unless they are cooled to a temperature near absolute zero.

104. According to the passage, which of the following describes a difference between fermions and bosons?

- (A) Fermions cannot inhabit the same fundamental state, whereas bosons bunch together in the same state.
- (B) Fermions contain many more types of particles than bosons.
- (C) Fermions exist in groups, but bosons do not.
- (D) Fermions have integral spin values, whereas Bosons have half-integer spin.
- (E) Fermions do not obey the Pauli principle, whereas bosons do.

105. Based on the information in the passage about the Pauli exclusion principle, to which one of the following situations would this principle be most relevant?

- (A) Fermi Energy: The maximum energy that electrons in a solid will contain in order to avoid having identical energy levels.
- (B) Particle Accelerators: Devices that will accelerate charged particles to very high speeds through the application of an external magnetic field.
- (C) Quantum Entanglement: When particles interact physically and then become separated but still have interdependent properties.
- (D) Double Slit Experiment: An experiment that revealed the particle and wave duality of photons.
- (E) The Higgs Field: The field produced by the conjectured Higg's particle that would explain why matter has mass

**NEXT GRE VERBAL SESSION @america on March 21!**  
**VERBAL REASONING REVIEW: OVERVIEW & HACKS**  
(with a deep focus on writing hacks & tools)

---