

# What You Need to Know about the GED Language Arts Reading Test

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# About the Test

- The GED reading test consists of 7 reading selections
- Each reading selection is followed by 4-8 multiple choice questions
- The test consists of a total of 40 multiple choice questions
- Test time is 65 minutes (1 hour and 5 minutes)

# About the Reading Selections

- Each section contains 300-400 words
  - 75 % Literature
    - Pre-1920, 1920-1960, 1960-present
    - 1 poem (8-25 lines)
    - 1 piece of drama
  - 25 % Non-Fiction
    - Includes at least 1 business document

# About the Questions

- Questions test a student's ability to
  - Comprehend (8 questions)
  - Apply (6 questions)
  - Synthesize (12-14 questions)
  - Analyze (12-14 questions)

## Example Question

The following example is based on an excerpt from a Chekhov short story titled, “The Nincompoop” in which the master of a large estate is reviewing his children’s governess’ monthly wages. During the course of the interview, the master catalogs the various minor losses for which he holds the governess responsible. For each infraction, he deducts money from the wages he owes the governess. In the end, the master offers the governess only the smallest fraction of her wages, and—incredibly to him—she accepts the pittance gratefully. He rails at her for being so submissive, saying that he was playing a “little joke” on her, a “cruel lesson, just to teach” her to stand up for herself. At the end, the master marvels to himself that it is “possible in this world to be without teeth and claws—to be such a nincompoop.”

# Example Question

**Directions: Choose the best answer to each item**

**Chekhov once wrote in his notebook “Man will become better only when you make him see what he is like.”**

How does this quotation relate to the passage?

1. It clarifies Chekhov’s purpose in having the narrator of the story try to change the governess’ behavior.
2. It reinforces Chekhov’s skill in capturing the governess’ anger.
3. It reveals Chekhov’s inability to depict the secondary characters mentioned in the passage.
4. It suggests that Chekhov’s goal as a writer was to use fiction to hide the flaws of humans.
5. It shows that Chekhov created characters that despised comments that would be considered critical.

# Answer

- The correct answer is
  1. It clarifies Chekhov's purpose in having the narrator of the story try to change the governess' behavior.

## Explanation

By taking money out of her paycheck, the narrator is trying to show the governess that she needs to change by standing up for herself more. The narrator's actions are consistent with Chekhov's statement that "man will only change when you make him see what he is like."

# Tips on How to Improve Reading Comprehension

- READ!!!
  - The only way you will be become a better reader is to READ!
  - Newspapers, Magazines, Popular Novels, ANYTHING!
  - Take even small amounts of time to read each day
- Build your vocabulary
  - When you come across a word you don't know look it up!
  - Reading will help with this too 😊
- Use the PQ4R system

# PQ4R

## Preview

- Look through the selection
- Read the first and last paragraph
- Pay attention to pictures or graphs

## Question

- Think about the information you saw during the preview
- What do you think the main point will be about?

# PQ4R

## Read

- Read the selection
- Make notes on important point(s)

## Reflect

- How are the paragraphs related
- How does the information fit into what you know

# PQ4R

## Recite

- Think about the material
- Write out key points

## Review

- Consider the main points
  - How do they reflect what you already know?
  - Do you agree/disagree?

# References

PQ4R system

<http://learningdisabilities.about.com/od/instructionalmaterials/a/pq4rstrategy.htm>

Basics about the GED reading test

<http://adulthood.about.com/od/gettingyourged/a/gedtestreading.htm>

The official GED Illinois guide includes practice questions and helpful tips

<http://www.ged-i.org/staffinfo/teachresources/start.pdf>