



Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators®



GACE® Study Companion

Middle Grades Reading Assessment

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| About the Assessment | 4 |
| Content Specifications | 5 |
| Test Subareas | 6 |
| Test Objectives..... | 6 |
| Subarea I: Curriculum and Instruction | 6 |
| Subarea II: Assessment and Evaluation..... | 7 |
| Subarea III: Diversity and Literate Environment | 8 |
| Practice Questions..... | 10 |
| Answer Key and Rationales | 19 |
| Preparation Resources | 25 |
| Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Assessment..... | 25 |
| Reducing Test Anxiety..... | 25 |
| Study Tips: Preparing for a GACE Assessment..... | 25 |
| Journals..... | 25 |
| Other Resources | 25 |
| Online Resources..... | 28 |

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

About the Assessment

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| Assessment Name | Middle Grades Reading |
| Grade Level | 4–8 |
| Test Code | 012 |
| Testing Time | 2 hours and 10 minutes |
| Test Duration | 2.5 hours |
| Test Format | Computer delivered |
| Number of Selected-response Questions | 90 |
| Question Format | The test consists of a variety of short-answer questions such as selected-response questions, where you select one answer choice or multiple answer choices (depending on what the question asks for), questions where you enter your answer in a text box, and other types of questions. You can review the possible question types in the Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Test . |
| Number of Constructed-response Questions | 0 |

The GACE Middle Grades Reading assessment is designed to measure the professional knowledge of prospective teachers of Middle Grades Reading in the state of Georgia.

The testing time is the amount of time you will have to answer the questions on the test. Test duration includes time for tutorials and directional screens that may be included in the test. This test includes listening items; an ETS-approved headset will be provided at the test center.

The questions in this assessment assess both basic knowledge across content areas and the ability to apply principles.

The total number of questions that are scored is typically smaller than the total number of questions on the test. Most tests that contain selected-response questions also include embedded pretest questions, which are not used in calculating your score. By including pretest questions in the assessment, ETS is able to analyze actual test-taker performance on proposed new questions and determine whether they should be included in future versions of the test.

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Content Specifications

This assessment is organized into content **subareas**. Each subarea is further defined by a set of **objectives** and their **knowledge statements**.

- The objectives broadly define what an entry-level educator in this field in Georgia public schools should know and be able to do.
- The knowledge statements describe in greater detail the knowledge and skills eligible for testing.
- Some tests also include content material at the evidence level. This content serves as descriptors of what each knowledge statement encompasses.

See a breakdown of the subareas and objectives for this assessment on the following pages.

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Test Subareas

| Subarea | Approx. Percentage of Test |
|---|----------------------------|
| I. Curriculum and Instruction* | 35% |
| II. Assessment and Evaluation | 35% |
| III. Diversity and Literate Environment | 30% |

* This subarea includes one or more questions that contain recorded audio information.

Test Objectives

Subarea I: Curriculum and Instruction

Objective 1: Understands the foundations of literacy acquisition and of reading and writing development

The beginning Middle Grades Reading teacher:

- A. Recognizes and applies major theories and research evidence of reading and writing processes and development in adolescence; i.e. behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism
- B. Demonstrates knowledge of first and second literacy acquisition and the role of native language in learning to read and write in a second language
- C. Explains and applies the research and theory of learning environments that support individual motivation to read and write
- D. Uses multiple sources of information to guide instructional planning to improve reading achievement of all students
- E. Implements the curriculum based on students' prior knowledge, real-world experiences, and interests
- F. Evaluates the curriculum to ensure that instructional goals and objectives in reading and writing are met
- G. Implements the curriculum through interdisciplinary connections using traditional print, digital, and online contexts
- H. Demonstrates knowledge of selecting diverse literary and informational materials in a variety of genres at varying text complexity levels from traditional print, digital, and online resources
- I. Demonstrates knowledge about various materials and their uses to promote higher order thinking, interpretation, argumentation, and making text connections

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Objective 2: Demonstrates an understanding of instructional approaches to meet students' needs

The beginning Middle Grades Reading teacher:

- A. Selects and implements reading and writing approaches that are research-based and meet student needs
- B. Differentiates instructional approaches to meet students' reading and writing needs in academic and domain-specific vocabulary
- C. Differentiates instructional approaches to meet students' reading and writing needs in comprehension
- D. Differentiates instructional approaches to meet students' reading and writing needs in fluency
- E. Differentiates instructional approaches to meet students' reading and writing needs in writing
- F. Differentiates instructional approaches to meet students' reading and writing needs in motivation
- G. Provides instruction in the strategic use of traditional print, digital, and online resources as instructional tools to enhance student learning
- H. Adapts instructional approaches and materials to meet the language-proficiency needs of English-language learners

Subarea II: Assessment and Evaluation

Objective 1: Understands the characteristics and purposes of assessments

The beginning Middle Grades Reading teacher:

- A. Demonstrates an understanding of established purposes for assessing student performance, including tools for screening, diagnosis, progress monitoring, and measuring outcomes
- B. Describes the strengths and limitations of assessment tools and their appropriate uses
- C. Recognizes the basic technical adequacy of assessments; e.g., reliability, content, and construct validity
- D. Explains state assessment frameworks, proficiency standards, and student benchmarks
- E. Selects or develops assessment tools to monitor student progress and to analyze instructional effectiveness
- F. Selects and develops classroom assessments using consistent, fair, and equitable assessment procedures

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Objective 2: Understands how to interpret, use, and communicate student assessment data for multiple purposes

The beginning Middle Grades Reading teacher:

- A. Interprets and uses assessment data to analyze individual, group, and classroom performance and progress within and across content areas and disciplines
- B. Analyzes and uses assessment data to plan and adjust instruction systematically and to select appropriate traditional print, digital, and online reading resources
- C. Uses assessment data to evaluate students' responses to instruction and to develop relevant next steps for teaching
- D. Identifies and interprets patterns in classroom and individual students' data
- E. Uses assessment data to collaboratively and/or individually modify instruction, monitor student progress, evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, and plan content literacy initiatives
- F. Communicates assessment purposes and a summary of results to appropriate audiences; i.e., student, parents or guardians, colleagues, and administrators

Subarea III: Diversity and Literate Environment

Objective 1: Demonstrates an understanding of how to meet the needs of diverse learners

The beginning Middle Grades Reading teacher:

- A. Demonstrates an understanding of the ways in which diversity can be used to strengthen a literate society, making it more productive, more adaptable to change, and more equitable
- B. Demonstrates an understanding of the ways in which diversity influences adolescent literacy development
- C. Demonstrates an understanding of the relationship between first- and second-language acquisition and literacy development
- D. Demonstrates an awareness of the various forms of diversity that exist in students, as well as in the surrounding community
- E. Provides differentiated instruction and instructional materials, including traditional print, digital, and online resources, that emphasize diversity
- F. Provides instructional formats that engage students as agents of their own learning
- G. Arranges and/or modifies their classrooms to provide easy access to books, other instructional materials, and specific areas designed for a variety of individual, small-group, and whole-class activities to differentiate instruction
- H. Demonstrates a respectful attitude toward all learners and understands the roles of choice, motivation, and scaffolded support in creating positive social environments

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Objective 2: Understands how creating a literate environment and professional learning contribute to student growth

The beginning Middle Grades Reading teacher:

- A. Models and teaches students appropriate ways to interact with each other and adults in a positive social environment
- B. Creates supportive environments where English-language learners are encouraged and given many opportunities to use English
- C. Displays and models positive reading and writing behaviors
- D. Understands the roles that diverse families and communities play in helping students apply reading and writing skills to content learning
- E. Creates strategies to involve all families, colleagues, and the community to support student learning
- F. Promotes student understanding of the value of reading traditional print, digital, and online resources in and out of school
- G. Demonstrates effective use of technology for improving student learning
- H. Recognizes and describes the importance of professional development for improving reading and writing in schools
- I. Describes effective ways to apply learning from professional development to instructional practices

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Practice Questions

The practice questions in this study companion are designed to familiarize you with the types of questions you may see on the assessment. While they illustrate some of the formats and types of questions you will see on the test, your performance on these sample questions should not be viewed as a predictor of your performance on the actual test. Fundamentally, the most important component in ensuring your success is familiarity with the content that is covered on the assessment.

To respond to a practice question, choose one of the answer options listed. Be sure to read the directions carefully to ensure that you know what is required for each question. You may find it helpful to time yourself to simulate actual testing conditions. A correct answer and a rationale for each sample test question are in the section following the practice questions.

Keep in mind that the test you take at an actual administration will have different questions, although the proportion of questions in each subarea will be approximately the same. You should not expect the percentage of questions you answer correctly in these practice questions to be exactly the same as when you take the test at an actual administration, since numerous factors affect a person's performance in any given testing situation.

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

1. Which of the following is a strategy that makes use of organizational features in a textbook to aid students in setting a purpose for their reading?
 - A. Using a glossary to define unfamiliar terms
 - B. Generating questions from the subheads
 - C. Using the index to locate information
 - D. Preview charts and other graphics

Answer and Rationale

2. A fourth-grade teacher asks students to use the Internet to search for information relating to a science question. Which of the following strategies would best help the students locate the information needed to answer the question?
 - A. Finding the authorship and copyright information for the website
 - B. Comparing and contrasting different search engines
 - C. Identifying key words that can be used for the search
 - D. Skimming through the information on different websites

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

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3. An English-language learner is experiencing difficulty retelling a story after reading it silently in English. According to current research, the teacher is likely to get the most accurate assessment of the student's comprehension by
- A. selecting a less difficult story for the student so that retelling it in English will be easier for the student.
 - B. having the student reread the story orally to determine which words he may be having difficulty understanding.
 - C. having him read the story with a partner for whom English is a first language, and having the other student retell the story in order to avoid language interference.
 - D. having him retell the story in his first language to someone who can assess his comprehension in that language.

Answer and Rationale

4. Mr. Henson provides his sixth-grade students with several of his personal photo albums. He instructs the students to browse through the albums for a few minutes and tells them that when he says stop, students should put a finger on one picture. Students then do a quick write to describe how the picture makes them feel. The activity is most likely planned to help students
- A. develop organizational writing skills.
 - B. generate ideas for writing.
 - C. develop the ability to find their voice.
 - D. make good word choices.

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

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5. A teacher asks students to record their thoughts, ideas, emotions, questions, and personal reflections after actively engaging in reading text. Which of the following is being used in the activity?
- A. Reader-response journal
 - B. Dialogue journal
 - C. Double-entry journal
 - D. Learning log

Answer and Rationale

6. Which of the following is the term for the understanding that spoken words consist of a sequence of individual sounds?
- A. Phonological awareness
 - B. Phonemic awareness
 - C. Alphabetic principle
 - D. Onset and rime

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

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7. Ashley, a fourth-grade student, has written a well-developed, multiparagraph paper about the history of Jamestown. She has reached which of the following stages of writing development?
- A. Emergent
 - B. Transitional
 - C. Fluent
 - D. Inferential

Answer and Rationale

8. Which of the following components of reading fluency is demonstrated by a student who reads with expression, appropriate phrasing, and good inflection?
- A. Emotion
 - B. Tone
 - C. Intensity
 - D. Prosody

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

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9. Which of the following is an example of differentiated instruction that best meets the needs of all learners?
- A. Students are provided with an organized series of reading materials, including leveled readers and workbooks. Students receive sequence-of-skill instruction in vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency.
 - B. Students are preassessed and placed into instructionally-tiered groups. Instruction is based on needs, and specific interventions are provided while ongoing progress monitoring occurs.
 - C. Students acquire reading skills through self-directed learning experiences. A variety of reading materials at different levels are provided as resources.
 - D. Students are given specific skill instruction in phonics and sight-word recognition. Authentic reading and writing instruction follows mastery of prereading skills.

Answer and Rationale

10. Which of the following is the most effective way to assist students in developing a rubric to evaluate a portfolio?
- A. Allowing students to work in groups to develop a list of items to be included in the portfolio
 - B. Asking students to use local standards to develop the requirements for a portfolio
 - C. Having students develop individual goals to incorporate into the rubric
 - D. Collaborating with students to develop the criteria for identifying an exemplary portfolio

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

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11. Which of the following is most appropriate for a fourth-grade teacher to include when communicating Georgia Milestones assessment results to students and parents or guardians?
- A. A comparison of the student's scores on norm-referenced portions to the scores of other students in the state
 - B. A detailed explanation of the student's results, using official testing terminologies
 - C. A prediction of outcomes on future assessments, using value-added analysis tools
 - D. A summary of objectives tested, areas of strength, and targeted areas for growth

Answer and Rationale

12. Which of the following is the best strategy for supporting a constructivist approach to writing instruction?
- A. Identifying students who are struggling with specific skills and providing tailored instruction for those students
 - B. Requiring students to make revisions to compositions that reflect reactions and comments from the teacher
 - C. Implementing a process approach to teaching writing by focusing students on the specific steps of the process
 - D. Setting up a writing lab in which students are encouraged to use their peers as resources for feedback and assistance

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

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13. An eighth-grade social studies teacher administers a cloze procedure to her students before they read a chapter on the Amazon rain forest. The measure is most likely used to assess students'
- A. understanding of the climate in the region.
 - B. knowledge of the purpose of SQ3R.
 - C. ability to use syntax and semantics to activate prior knowledge.
 - D. proficiency in reading fluency.

Answer and Rationale

14. Which of the following is a form of authentic assessment?
- A. A reading diagnostic test
 - B. A phonics screener
 - C. An end-of-unit reading test
 - D. Anecdotal records

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

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15. Which of the following statements demonstrates a students' ability to make connections with the text he or she is reading?
- A. I think the boy is going to get in trouble when his mother finds out.
 - B. I don't understand why the boy lied.
 - C. This reminds me of a time when I got in trouble for lying.
 - D. I see now that the boy was angry with his brother and that's why he lied.

Answer and Rationale

16. A fourth-grade student writes answers to comprehension questions after reading a chapter in a novel. For each of the questions, the student is also asked to explain the strategic reading process used to determine the answer. Which of the following best describes the comprehension strategy?
- A. DR-TA
 - B. KWL
 - C. QAR
 - D. SQ3R

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Answer Key and Rationales

| Question Number | Correct Answer | Rationale |
|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 1 | B | <p>Option B is correct. Only option B helps students set a purpose for reading. Knowing they will have to answer these questions when they are finished with the passage helps students find a specific purpose for reading.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 2 | C | <p>Option C is correct. Key words in the question can be used as search terms in a search engine, thereby giving students direction and a strategy to use in answering the questions.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 3 | D | <p>Option D is correct. An English-language learner (ELL) must work through unfamiliar sociolinguistic and sociocultural acts to express in English what he or she knows about the content of the text. Since the student must focus on linguistic tasks in addition to cognitive tasks, retelling the story in the native language will allow the student to focus primarily on the single cognitive task.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

| Question Number | Correct Answer | Rationale |
|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 4 | B | <p>Option B is correct. Helping students find ideas to encourage writing can be difficult. By sharing personal photographs, the teacher motivates students to write and provides a model of one way (sharing a meaningful personal experience) to get ideas.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 5 | A | <p>Option A is correct. When students are asked to record their feelings, responses, and reactions to reading texts, they are encouraged to think deeply about the material and to relate the information to their prior knowledge and personal experiences. Using a reader-response journal is a strategy for encouraging an interaction between the reader and the text.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 6 | B | <p>Option B is correct. Phonemic awareness is the awareness of the smallest units of sound (phonemes) that make up spoken words. Awareness of individual sounds and the sequence of these sounds to form a word is an important skill in learning to read.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

| Question Number | Correct Answer | Rationale |
|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 7 | C | <p>Option C is correct. Students have reached the fluent stage of writing when they write in paragraphs and can vary their writing according to different genres. Generally, students at this stage use correct spelling and writing conventions, such as punctuation and capitalization.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 8 | D | <p>Option D is correct. Prosody is a component of reading fluency, an important part of a student’s literacy development. A fluent reader must be able to read with accuracy, automaticity, and meaningful expression.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 9 | B | <p>Option B is correct. An effective differentiated instruction classroom will have screening and ongoing progress monitoring to determine specific student needs, as well as instructional planning and intervention to meet the identified needs of all students.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

| Question Number | Correct Answer | Rationale |
|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 10 | D | <p>Option D is correct. Portfolios provide a structure that involves students in their own learning. When students are involved in making decisions about how to evaluate the pieces that will be put into their portfolios, they become more interested in their own work and learning.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 11 | D | <p>Option D is correct. When sharing assessment results with students and parents or guardians it is most appropriate to give a summary of objectives tested, areas of strength, and targeted areas of growth, as well as what students did well on, and what they struggled with.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 12 | D | <p>Option D is correct. Constructivist teachers guide students to help them find their own answers with peer collaboration.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

| Question Number | Correct Answer | Rationale |
|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 13 | C | <p>Option C is correct. A cloze procedure can be used as a diagnostic reading assessment to measure students' vocabulary and prior knowledge of a topic. Based on the information gathered from the cloze procedure, the teacher can make appropriate instructional decisions in planning the unit.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 14 | D | <p>Option D is correct. Authentic assessments test how well a student performs in real-world contexts. In terms of literacy skills, a teacher examines the processes and the products that students use as they speak, listen, read, and write. In addition to anecdotal records, other examples of authentic assessments include group or individual projects, oral presentations, performances, reading logs, teacher-student conferences, and observations.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |
| 15 | C | <p>Option C is correct. With this statement, the student is clearly connecting something from his life to the story being read.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

| Question Number | Correct Answer | Rationale |
|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 16 | C | <p>Option C is correct. T. Raphael created Question-Answer-Relationships (QAR) to help students become strategic readers by understanding that answers to questions are related to the type of question that is being asked. Raphael describes four QARs: “Right There” refers to the answer that is in the text. “Think and Search” refers to the answer that is in the text but may be broken, and the reader needs to look in different sections to locate it. “Author and You” means that the answer may not be in the text, but the reader needs to use information the author has given, combined with what the reader already knows, to answer the question. “On My Own” means the answer is not in the text, and the reader does not need to read the text to correctly answer the question.</p> <p>Back to Question</p> |

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select “Previous View” to go back to original text.

Preparation Resources

The resources listed below may help you prepare for the GACE assessment in this field. These preparation resources have been identified by content experts in the field to provide up-to-date information that relates to the field in general. You may wish to use current issues or editions of these materials to obtain information on specific topics for study and review.

Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Assessment

This guide explains how to navigate through a GACE assessment and how to answer different types of test questions. This free download is available in the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare.

Reducing Test Anxiety

This guide provides practical help for people who suffer from test anxiety. Designed specifically for GACE test takers, but useful to anyone who has to take tests, this guide reviews the major causes of test anxiety and offers practical advice for how to counter each one. Download this guide for free from the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare.

Study Tips: Preparing for a GACE Assessment

This document contains useful information on preparing for selected-response and constructed-response tests. The instruction, tips, and suggestions can help you become a better-prepared test taker. See the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare for this free download.

Journals

Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, International Reading Association

The Reading Teacher, International Reading Association

Other Resources

Adams, M. J. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Adams, M. J. (1998). *The three-cueing system*. In J. Osborn and F. Lehr, eds. *Literacy for all issues*. In Adams, M. J., and Bruck, M. (1995, Summer). *Resolving the "Great Debate."* *American Educator*, 19:2, 7, 10–20.

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Online Resources

Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) — www.eric.ed.gov

International Reading Association — www.reading.org

readwritethink — www.readwritethink.org

Georgia Department of Education — www.doe.k12.ga.us

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