

**Unit Nine**

**Reading, Thinking,  
Analyzing,  
Researching:**

**Strategies for the  
GED  
and Beyond**

# UNIT NINE:

## Reading, Thinking, Analyzing, Researching: Strategies for the GED and Beyond

### *Suggestions for the Instructor*

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**Pg. 9 -17 - 9-18 -- "Coming to an Awareness of Language" by Malcolm X**

<https://bpsbt.wikispaces.com/file/view/Malcom+X.doc>

<http://poetry.rapgenius.com/Malcolm-x-chapter-11-saved-annotated>

This excerpt from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* describes the life changing experience he had learning to read while he was in prison. You may choose to read the excerpt aloud to the class, ask volunteers to read aloud, or ask students to read it silently, then ask them to answer the questions which follow.

(After students have read the essays by Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass and Dexter Manley and the poem by Bertolt Brecht, and answered the questions for each, consider having them compare and contrast their experiences with learning to read by writing an evidence-based essay [page 9-28 - 9-30]).

#### **ANSWERS:**

1. Why did Malcolm X start writing letters in prison?

**He wanted to tell people about Allah and Islam and Elijah Muhammad.**

2. What kind of response did he get? Why?

- **His friends from the streets didn't reply because he said "the average hustler was too uneducated to write a letter."**
- **The letters he wrote to the mayor, the governor and the president weren't answered because they probably never saw his letters (due to censorship.)**

3. What does Malcolm X mean when he says "I was the most articulate hustler out there?"

**He expressed himself well in speaking but not in writing.**

4. What does he mean when he says he was only "going through book-reading motions"?

**He skipped words he didn't know and therefore didn't understand much of what he read.**

5. What did he do to deal with his problems with reading and writing?

**He decided to copy the dictionary word for word.**

6. In what way is the dictionary like a "miniature encyclopedia"?

**He learned about people and places and events from history.**

(continued)

7. What does Malcolm X say even though he was imprisoned “he had never been so truly free in my life”?

**A whole world opened up to him; he read constantly; he corresponded with people and had visitors; he never even thought about being imprisoned.**

8. Would you be willing to take up the challenge to copy the entire dictionary? Would you copy one page word for word? How long do you think it would take? What do you think you would learn from the experience?

**Answers will vary. Consider offering the challenge to students to copy one page of the dictionary then discuss what they learned after they have finished.**

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### **Pg. 9-19 - 9-22 -- “Learning to Read and Write” by Frederick Douglass**

“Learning to Read and Write” from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* describes the famous abolitionist’s experience learning to read and the power he associated with literacy. (The complete autobiography is available on-line at [www.gutenberg.org/files/23/23-h/23-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/23/23-h/23-h.htm).)

Ask students to read the excerpt in order to understand the efforts slave society made to keep enslaved Africans from reading; encourage a discussion about the importance of reading in today’s society as well. You may choose to read the excerpt aloud to the class, ask volunteers to read aloud, or ask students to read it silently. After reading, ask students to answer the questions which follow, then discuss their answers with the class.

(After students have read the essays by Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass and Dexter Manley and the poem by Bertolt Brecht, and answered the questions for each, consider having them compare and contrast their experiences with learning to read by writing an evidence-based essay [page 9-28 - 9-30]).

#### **ANSWERS:**

1. How was Douglass’s experience with Mrs. Auld at first different from his experience with other white women?

**At first she was kind and good to him. She did not respond well to “crouching servility;” she “seemed to be disturbed by it.” She didn’t think it was improper for a slave to look her in the face; he was at ease with her.**

2. How did her voice, her eyes and her face change with time? And why? What do you think Douglass is trying to communicate by telling the reader about how Mrs. Auld changed?

**Douglass says that being a slaveholder changed her into an angry, harsh and demonic looking person. He wanted to show that people can be dramatically changed by having so much power over another person, which he called “the fatal poison of irresponsible power.”**

(continued)

3. Douglass's slaveholder, Mr. Auld, told his wife that it was "unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read" and that teaching him would "forever unfit him to be a slave." He said the slave would become "unmanageable, and of no value to his master." What did he mean by this? Why was teaching a slave to read so threatening to slave society?

**Douglass believed that literacy would make people free and independent of spirit, and they would not easily obey. Teaching a slave to read was threatening to slaveholder society because slaves would become more empowered to try to change their situation, to escape from slavery, to speak out, or to fight back.**

4. Auld also said "As to himself, it could do him no good, but a great deal of harm. It would make him discontented and unhappy." Why did Auld believe this? Why would he be afraid of the slaves becoming discontented and unhappy?

**If slaves were discontented and unhappy they would be more likely to try to change their situation, to escape from slavery, to speak out, or to fight back.**

5. Why did the fact that Auld forbade his wife to teach Douglass how to read inspire him "with a desire and determination to learn"?

**He realized how valuable and powerful reading was because it was so threatening to Auld.**

6. Is Douglass's story relevant today? Are there any situations today in which people are being denied the opportunity to learn?

**Answers will vary. Ask students to consider high-poverty schools in the United States and elsewhere where significant numbers of people drop out of school, countries where girls are not allowed to go to school, etc.**

7. Both Auld and Douglass believed that the ability to read is extremely powerful. Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

**Answers will vary. Ask students to support their opinions with evidence and examples.**

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### **Pg. 9-23 - 9-24 - "Until He Tackled His Illiteracy, the Redskins' Gridiron Terror Lived in Fear of the ABC's" by Dexter Manley**

[www.people.com/people/article/0,,20121269,00.html](http://www.people.com/people/article/0,,20121269,00.html)

Ask students to read the article about Washington Redskins' defensive end Dexter Manley and his struggles with illiteracy in order to encourage a discussion about the importance of reading and the barriers that exist in society for people who don't read well. You may choose to read the article aloud to the class, ask volunteers to read aloud, or ask students to read it silently. After reading, ask students to answer the questions which follow, then discuss their answers with the class.

(continued)

(After students have read the essays by Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass and Dexter Manley and the poem by Bertolt Brecht, and answered the questions for each, consider having them compare and contrast their experiences with learning to read by writing an evidence-based essay [page 9-28 – 9-30]).

**ANSWERS:**

1. What were some of the emotions Dexter Manley experienced as a child as a result of his inability to read?

**He felt frustration. He felt he wasn't normal. He started believing negative things kids said about him. He began to hate himself.**

2. What were some of the coping strategies he used to help him deal with his illiteracy?

- **He took out his frustrations on others.**
- **He pretended he'd lost his glasses.**
- **He cribbed (cheated) off of other students' papers.**
- **He denied his problems and ignored academics.**
- **He never wrote essays on tests.**
- **He guessed on multiple choice questions.**
- **He had his girlfriend write his final paper for him.**
- **He pretended to read the Wall Street Journal in the locker room.**
- **He ordered what other people ordered in restaurants.**
- **He pretended he was too busy to read so his wife would read articles aloud to him.**

3. Do you think his alcoholism and drug problems were a result of his struggles with reading? **Answers will vary. Manley said they were not directly connected to not being able to read, but maybe he didn't want to face reality.**

4. What happened that shocked Manley into realizing he had a problem?

**When Joe Theismann, the Redskins quarterback, broke his leg, Manley realized that one bad thing could happen and his career could be over; he wouldn't be able to play football forever so he'd have to have other skills.**

5. What did Manley do when he finally admitted he had a problem?

**He enrolled in the Lab School and got tutoring to learn how to read.**

6. What adjectives would you use to describe Manley?

**Honest, courageous, generous, strong, smart, talented. Answers will vary.**

7. Have you ever had similar experiences to any that Manley described?

**Students may share experiences they have had related to reading, to struggles in school, to cheating or keeping secrets, if they are willing.**

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## Pg. 9-25 - 9-26 - "In Praise of Learning" by Bertolt Brecht

<http://talkingdictionary.clubefl.gr/2011/10/14/in-praise-of-learning-by-bertolt-brecht/>

Ask students to read this poem by Bertolt Brecht after reading the essays by Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass and Dexter Manley and to answer the questions which follow.

(After students have read the essays by Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass and Dexter Manley and the poem by Bertolt Brecht, and answered the questions for each, consider having them compare and contrast their experiences with learning to read by writing an evidence-based essay [page 9-28 - 9-30]).

1. According to the poet, who are all the people who should learn to read?
  - **people in the asylum**
  - **people in prison**
  - **women in the kitchen (workers and people at home)**
  - **sixty year olds**
  - **people who are homeless**
  - **people who are cold and hungry**
2. What are the main reasons given in this poem for learning to read?  
**He believes people should learn to read so they can take over the leadership (participate in democracy and work for social change) as well as take charge of their own lives.**
3. Are these the reasons usually given in school?  
**Usually people are told that learning to read is necessary for getting a job and going to college. Answers may vary - encourage students to share their personal stories about they were told (or not) about the importance of reading.**
4. In what way is a book a "weapon"? How does Brecht's attitude about reading compare with that of Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass, and Dexter Manley?  
**His views are similar to those of the other writers in that he believes literacy is connected to power and that people can impact the world and their own lives if they know how to read. A book is a weapon because knowledge can be used to fight against injustice.**
5. What does Brecht mean by "What you do not know yourself / you do not know"?  
**He believes people need to be in charge of their own knowledge and need to be independent.**
6. What does he mean when he says "Scrutinize the bill, / it is you who must pay it. / Put your finger on each item, / ask: how did this get there?" Do you agree with this advice? How does this advice relate to your own experience?  
**He is referring to the importance of having skills so you can be responsible for your own life, not be cheated or taken advantage of, etc. Encourage students to share any experiences they have had with using or not having literacy skills.**

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**Pg. 9-27 - 9-28 -- Evidence-based Writing: Compare & Contrast ~  
Learning to Read**

After students have read the essays by Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass and Dexter Manley and the poem by Bertolt Brecht, and answered the questions for each, follow up by asking students to write an essay in response to this evidence-based writing prompt.

**Prompt**

*Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass, Dexter Manley and Bertolt Brecht all discuss the important of learning to read. How are their ideas similar? How are they different? Pick at least two of the essays and compare the authors' experiences and conclusions about the importance of reading. Use evidence from the essays to support your answer. Type your essay.*

You may choose to guide the evidence-based writing practice using these tools:

- Introduce the **“Read like a Detective”** plan sheet to help students gather evidence from the article to support your answer.
- Have students use **the “Write like a Reporter”** plan sheet to outline key points to use in the introduction, body and conclusion of their essays.

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## **Pg. 9-29 - 9-32 -- Twelve Powerful Words**

Share with students the Twelve Powerful Words by Larry Bell. Not understanding these important vocabulary words can interfere with students' ability to do well on standardized test questions. The Twelve Powerful Words can be taught explicitly in order to:

- help students to understand what test questions are asking for
- elicit higher order thinking
- relieve test anxiety
- be more successful answering questions on standardized tests.

In addition to the handouts here (**Twelve Powerful Words Matching Game, Words Search, Crossword Puzzle**), many other resources and videos for teaching the Twelve Powerful Words are available on the internet:

<http://www.larry-bell.com/index.asp>

<http://www.fentress.k12tn.net/LarryBellStrategies/12powerfulwords.pdf>

<http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/TaylorES/webpages/12powerfulwords.htm>

### **Twelve Powerful Words Crossword Puzzle**

#### **ANSWERS:**

##### **Across:**

2. to show how two things are alike -- **compare**
6. to make judgments -- **evaluate**
9. to break down into parts in order to examine closely -- **analyze**
10. to teach how to do something or how something works -- **explain**
12. to foretell, to use information in the text to infer future events -- **predict**

##### **Down**

1. to create -- **formulate**
3. to tell the main points in your own words -- **summarize**
4. to show how two things are different -- **contrast**
5. to back up with facts -- **support**
7. to outline -- **trace**
8. to give details about something -- **describe**
11. to figure out based on evidence -- **infer**

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### **Pg. 9-33 - 9-46 -- Important GED & College Vocabulary**

Review with students these key literary terms. Tell them they will be useful in the Reading through Language Arts section of the GED as well as in the college classroom. Engage them in various strategies for memorizing important vocabulary, such as:

- Writing definitions in their own words
- Seeking and highlighting vocabulary in literature or language arts textbooks
- Creating flashcards
- Quizzing each other
- Playing matching or concentration games
- Playing jeopardy

After sufficient practice, quiz students on the Important Reading Vocabulary. Have them continue to review and practice the terms until they can define them correctly.

### **IMPORTANT GED & COLLEGE VOCABULARY ~ Part One ~ QUIZ**

#### **ANSWERS:**

- |    |                       |    |                           |
|----|-----------------------|----|---------------------------|
| 1  | Chronological order   | 30 | Character's point of view |
| 2  | Antagonist            | 31 | Falling action            |
| 3  | Flashback             | 32 | Figurative language       |
| 4  | Alliteration          | 33 | Foreshadowing             |
| 5  | Allusion              | 34 | Exposition                |
| 6  | Chart                 | 35 | Inference                 |
| 7  | Excerpt               | 36 | Imagery                   |
| 8  | Argument              | 37 | Internal conflict         |
| 9  | Author's bias         | 38 | Informational non-fiction |
| 10 | Affix                 | 39 | Descriptive language      |
| 11 | Analyze               | 40 | Cause and effect          |
| 12 | Author's perspective  |    |                           |
| 13 | Antonym               |    | (continued)               |
| 14 | Compare               |    |                           |
| 15 | Fiction               |    |                           |
| 16 | Base word             |    |                           |
| 17 | Compare/contrast      |    |                           |
| 18 | Consumer materials    |    |                           |
| 19 | Author's purpose      |    |                           |
| 20 | External conflict     |    |                           |
| 21 | Contrast              |    |                           |
| 22 | Evaluate              |    |                           |
| 23 | Diction               |    |                           |
| 24 | Context clues         |    |                           |
| 25 | Hyperbole             |    |                           |
| 26 | Character development |    |                           |
| 27 | Fact                  |    |                           |
| 28 | Drawing conclusions   |    |                           |
| 29 | Conflict              |    |                           |

## IMPORTANT GED & COLLEGE VOCABULARY ~ Part Two ~ QUIZ

### ANSWERS:

1	Primary source	17	Prefix
2	Satire	18	Irony
3	Metaphor	19	Simile
4	Resolution	20	Main idea
5	Nonfiction	21	Point of view
6	Moral	22	Synonym
7	Plot	23	Implied main idea
8	Perspective	24	Predict
9	Secondary source	25	Interpret
10	Setting	26	Suffix
11	Mood	27	Myth
12	Symbolism	28	Sarcasm
13	Synthesize	29	Theme
14	Table	30	Topic
15	Rising action	31	Personification
16	Paraphrase	32	Protagonist
		33	Relevant details

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### **Pg. 9-47 - 9-48 -- Book Summary**

Encourage students to read books of their own choosing. If possible, order high interest fiction and non-fiction titles from Townsend Press ([www.townsendpress.com](http://www.townsendpress.com)) or find a variety of high interest used books for students to read, preferably during their own time. Remind them that reading books that interest them will help increase their fluency, comprehension and vocabulary.

You may choose to have students do reports on books they have read, using the book summary sheet to identify the genre, summarize the story, discuss main characters, describe the setting, and explain why they would or would not recommend the book to others. Ask students to fill in the blanks on the handout, then retype their book summaries before sharing them with the class.

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### **Pg. 9-49 - 9-50 -- Words of Wisdom: Critical Thinking**

Read the quotes about critical thinking aloud with the class. Ask students to each pick a quote that intrigues them and to write about it, reflecting on:

- what they think the speaker means
- whether they agree and why or why not
- how the quote is or is not relevant to their lives
- specific examples from their lives or others' lives which highlight its meaning

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### **Pg. 9-51 -- The Importance of Critical Thinking Skills**

Critical thinking is the key to doing well in college. Read this handout with students in order to acquaint them with the importance of critical thinking skills. Remind them that people who think critically and who evaluate what they see, hear and read are far better equipped to evaluate their life choices, address social problems, make judgments about community issues and evaluate the decisions of politicians, bosses and community leaders. Discuss with them the ways in which critical thinking is vital to college-level study, is intricately connected to creative thinking, and can be deeply empowering.

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### **Pg. 9-52 - 9-54 -- Strategies for Building Critical Thinking Skills**

On this handout, students learn strategies for developing critical thinking skills. They learn the importance of active listening, brainstorming and asking questions.

#### **Active Listening**

To prepare to help students practice active listening, you will need to find an article or story to read aloud to the students, or find an excerpt from an audiobook or a video of a public speaker. Ask them to listen attentively and with full concentration because they will be asked to discuss the main idea and the details after the story or lecture is finished. After students have finished, asked them to share what they learned and, most importantly, what strategies they used to engage actively with the learning experience.

#### **Brainstorming**

Remind students that brainstorming is a creativity technique designed to help us come up with a large number of possible solutions to a problem. Review the steps for brainstorming, then ask students to work in small groups. Tell them to imagine that they are taking a college history course. The class is difficult and their grades are low. Their goal is to get a B in the class. Tell groups to brainstorm all the things they can do to ensure that they earn a B in the class. When students are finished, ask them to share their lists with the class.

#### **Asking questions**

Remind students that asking questions enables us as listeners and readers to engage with the information we are learning. It gives us tools for going deeper, getting relevant facts, understanding better and making decisions and judgments. Read the handout to review the importance of using a variety of questioning techniques and the value of asking various types of questions.

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### **Pg. 9-55 – 9-56 -- Watch Out for “Uncritical Thinking”**

Review with students typical types of “uncritical thinking.” Read the handout aloud and discuss examples from daily life of these common forms of non-logical and non-critical thinking, then ask students to read the sentences on the handout and determine which type of non-logical or non-critical thinking is being used.

#### **ANSWERS:**

1. A few people were harmed during World War II. -- **understatement**
2. If we make marijuana legal, there won't be any more crime. -- **oversimplification**
3. All people from Canada are brilliant. -- **generalizations / stereotypes**
4. Kids who wear their pants low are a bunch of criminals.  
**generalizations / stereotypes / jumping to conclusions**
5. Everyone who watches that TV station is an idiot.  
**generalizations / stereotypes / jumping to conclusions**
6. Police officers who racially profile should be fired, and that's a fact.  
**opinions as facts / oversimplification**
7. If the President cuts taxes, the economy will improve.  
**jumping to conclusions / oversimplification**
8. Problems with the health care system can be easily fixed. -- **oversimplification**
9. Christians should never lie. -- **absolutes**
10. The vast majority of Americans voted for President Obama. -- **exaggeration**
11. It'll take a million years for men to overcome sexist ideas.  
**exaggeration / underlying assumptions**
12. People who have health problems don't take care of themselves.  
**opinions as facts / underlying assumptions**
13. A representative of Camel Cigarette Company cited research to prove that there is no connection between smoking and cancer. -- **slant / bias**
14. Life was better in the nineties than it is today. -- **opinions as facts / oversimplification**
15. All Italians are good at math. -- **generalizations / stereotypes**
16. I'm from the United States, so I know firsthand that Americans are the smartest people in the world. -- **slant / bias / generalizations**
17. The ocean is kind of big. - **understatement**
18. It's a small world. - **oversimplification / understatement**
19. Life is easy. -- **opinions as facts / oversimplification**

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### **Pg. 9-57 -- Apply Critical Thinking Skills to Real Life Problems**

Remind students that there are four steps that can be useful in solving problems: Understand the problem; brainstorm to pose solutions; try out possible solutions; check results to evaluate whether the solution worked or whether something different should be tried.

Ask students to evaluate their creative and critical problem-solving strategies by completing the handout and addressing the questions. Ask volunteers to discuss their answers with the class.

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### **Pg. 9-58 - 9-60 -- Higher Order Thinking Skills (H.O.T.S.)**

On this handout, students review five higher order thinking skills (H.O.T.S) they will be called on to use when they do college-level learning: **Knowledge, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation**. Ask them to work in small groups to read the definitions of each of the higher-order thinking skills and write an example of an activity from daily life which involves this type of thinking.

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### **Pg. 9-61 - 9-66 -- How to Overcome Test Anxiety**

*Adapted from <http://theconversation.com/how-to-overcome-exam-anxiety-67445>*

Ask students:

- Do you often think you are going to fail an exam?
- Do you feel like your mind freezes during tests?
- Do you find yourself thinking “I really can’t do this”?
- Does your heart race fast or do you find it hard to breathe during exams?

Tell them that most people feel anxious when taking a test, but research shows that some people are more likely to suffer from exam anxiety than others. Have them read the article in order to learn why this is and what people can do to calm their nerves. Have the students study the vocabulary before reading the article, then refer back to the list if necessary while they are reading.

#### **ANSWERS:**

1. What is exam anxiety?  
**b. feeling intense fear or panic before or during a test**
2. When is anxiety considered to be high level?  
**d. when it starts to affect your ability to complete the exam**
3. Which of the following is a physical response of high level anxiety?  
**c. speeding heart**
4. In which situation could anxiety be helpful?  
**c. when being chased or attacked**

5. Which of the following is **NOT** an example of self-care from the passage?  
  - c. **having a dessert after a test**
6. What is mindfulness?  
  - b. **focusing on the present and accepting anxious feelings**
7. People with high level anxiety usually see exams as...  
  - d. **a threatening situation**
8. What is the difference between low anxiety and high anxiety? Use details from the passage to support your answer.  

**Students with low anxiety will feel nervous before a test, but are still able to focus their attention on the exam. Students with high anxiety have immediate anxiety when testing and have trouble finishing their exam.**
9. Read the section, "Tips for coping with test anxiety." Which tip do you think could be the most helpful for someone who is going through test anxiety? Use examples to support your answer.  

**Answers will vary.**

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**Pg. 9-67 – 9-68 -- How to Handle Anxiety: Situation Cards**

Tell students that anxiety is a normal part of life. It is important to know how to handle situations which cause anxiety. Have them read the situations listed on the cards and work in pairs or small groups to determine what strategies could be used to cope with the anxiety the person is feeling. Ask them to discuss why they chose the strategies they did and how the strategies would help.

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**Pg. 9-69 -- Brain Dump**

Tell students that before they take a test, they can spend about five minutes writing down everything that is going through their minds. It does not need to make sense to anyone but them. Tell them that this is their chance to express any thoughts or feelings they are having about the test, whether they are positive or negative. Writing these ideas out can help them clear their minds and calm themselves down before the test.

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**Pg. 9-70 -- Practice Your Breathing Skills**

Have students read about breathing exercises that can help people calm down and slow down their thoughts when they start to feel anxious. The first breathing activity is one that can be done quickly **during a test** if they start to feel overwhelmed. The second exercise can be done **before a test or between sections** to prepare the body and brain for the test they are about to take.

Have students practice the Quieting Response, which utilizes visualization and deep breathing (a powerful combination) to stop an acute stress response in its tracks. The entire exercise only takes 6 seconds!

Have students practice breath counting, a deceptively simple breathing technique.

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## **Unit Nine**

# **Reading, Thinking, Analyzing, Researching: Strategies for the GED and Beyond**

### **Student Activities**



# Coming to an Awareness of Language Malcolm X

The Autobiography of Malcolm X was published in 1965. Malcolm X, a civil rights activist and Nation of Islam leader, wrote his autobiography with Alex Haley between 1963 and Malcolm X's assassination in 1965. The Autobiography of Malcolm X describes Malcolm X's rise from street hustler to national spokesperson for black pride and Black Nationalism. This excerpt describes the life changing experience he had learning to read while he was in prison.



<https://bpsbt.wikispaces.com/file/view/Malcom+X.doc>

<http://poetry.rapgenius.com/Malcolm-x-chapter-11-saved-annotated>

1. Why did Malcolm X start writing letters in prison?

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2. What kind of response did he get? Why?

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3. What does Malcolm X mean when he says "I was the most articulate hustler out there?"

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Image from Creative Commons <http://www.anticapitalistes.net/spip.php?article4880>

***Coming to an Awareness of Language, cont.***

4. What does Malcolm X mean when he says he was only “going through book-reading motions”?

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5. What did he do to deal with his problems with reading and writing?

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6. In what way is the dictionary like a “miniature encyclopedia”?

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7. What does Malcolm X say even though he was imprisoned “he had never been so truly free in my life”?

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8. Would you be willing to take up the challenge to copy the entire dictionary? Would you copy one page word for word? How long do you think it would take? What do you think you would learn from the experience?

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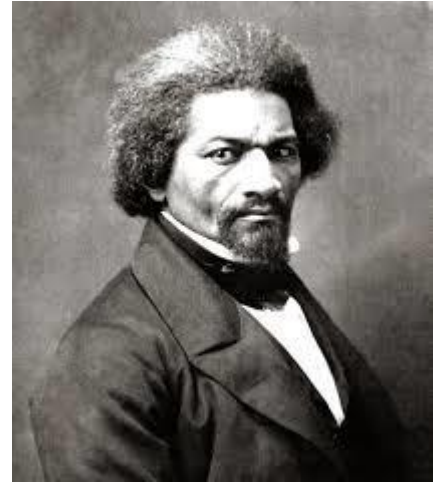
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# Learning to Read and Write: from Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

(The complete autobiography is available on-line at  
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/23/23-h/23-h.htm>.)

## Excerpt from CHAPTER VI

*Frederick Douglass (1818 - 1895) was an African-American social reformer, writer, orator and statesman. As a young boy he was sent to Baltimore, to be a house servant, where he learned to read and write, with the assistance of his master's wife. In 1838 he escaped from slavery and went to New York City, where he married Anna Murray, a free colored woman whom he had met in Baltimore. He became a central figure in the abolitionist movement, gaining widespread recognition for his passionate anti-slavery speeches. He wrote three autobiographies. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, his 1845 description of his life as a slave, became a bestseller and influenced many people to join the abolitionist movement.*



My new mistress proved to be all she appeared when I first met her at the door,—a woman of the kindest heart and finest feelings. She had never had a slave under her control previously to myself, and prior to her marriage she had been dependent upon her own industry for a living. She was by trade a weaver; and by constant application to her business, she had been in a good degree preserved from the blighting and dehumanizing effects of slavery. I was utterly astonished at her goodness. I scarcely knew how to behave towards her. She was entirely unlike any other white woman I had ever seen. I could not approach her as I was accustomed to approach other white ladies. My early instruction was all out of place. The crouching servility, usually so acceptable a quality in a slave, did not answer when manifested toward her. Her favor was not gained by it; she seemed to be disturbed by it. She did not deem it impudent or unmannerly for a slave to look her in the face. The meanest slave was put fully at ease in her presence, and none left without feeling better for having seen her. Her face was made of heavenly smiles, and her voice of tranquil music.

But, alas! this kind heart had but a short time to remain such. The fatal poison of irresponsible power was already in her hands, and soon commenced its infernal work. That cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage; that voice, made all of sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon.

*Photo from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frederick\\_Douglas\\_NYHS\\_c1866.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frederick_Douglas_NYHS_c1866.jpg)*

### ***Learning to Read and Write, cont.***

Very soon after I went to live with Mr. and Mrs. Auld, she very kindly commenced to teach me the A, B, C. After I had learned this, she assisted me in learning to spell words of three or four letters. Just at this point of my progress, Mr. Auld found out what was going on, and at once forbade Mrs. Auld to instruct me further, telling her, among other things, that it was unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read. To use his own words, further, he said, "If you give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell. A nigger should know nothing but to obey his master – to do as he is told to do. Learning would *spoil* the best nigger in the world. Now," said he, "if you teach that nigger (speaking of myself) how to read, there would be no keeping him. It would forever unfit him to be a slave. He would at once become unmanageable, and of no value to his master. As to himself, it could do him no good, but a great deal of harm. It would make him discontented and unhappy." These words sank deep into my heart, stirred up sentiments within that lay slumbering, and called into existence an entirely new train of thought. It was a new and special revelation, explaining dark and mysterious things, with which my youthful understanding had struggled, but struggled in vain. I now understood what had been to me a most perplexing difficulty – to wit, the white man's power to enslave the black man. It was a grand achievement, and I prized it highly.



From that moment, I understood the pathway from slavery to freedom. It was just what I wanted, and I got it at a time when I the least expected it. Whilst I was saddened by the thought of losing the aid of my kind mistress, I was gladdened by the invaluable instruction which, by the merest accident, I had gained from my master. Though conscious of the difficulty of learning without a teacher, I set out with high hope, and a fixed purpose, at whatever cost of trouble, to learn how to read. The very decided manner with which he spoke, and strove to impress his wife with the evil consequences of giving me instruction, served to convince me that he was deeply sensible of the truths he was uttering. It gave me the best assurance that I might rely with the utmost confidence on the results which, he said, would flow from teaching me to read. What he most dreaded, that I most desired. What he most loved, that I most hated. That which to him was a great evil, to be carefully shunned, was to me a great good, to be diligently sought; and the argument which he so warmly urged, against my learning to read, only served to inspire me with a desire and determination to learn. In learning to read, I owe almost as much to the bitter opposition of my master, as to the kindly aid of my mistress. I acknowledge the benefit of both.

**Learning to Read and Write, cont.**

1. How was Douglass's experience with Mrs. Auld at first different from his experience with other white women?

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2. How did her voice, her eyes and her face change with time? And why? What do you think Douglass is trying to communicate by telling the reader about how Mrs. Auld changed?

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3. Douglass's slaveholder, Mr. Auld, told his wife that it was "unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read" and that teaching him would "forever unfit him to be a slave." He said the slave would become "unmanageable, and of no value to his master." What did he mean by this? Why was teaching a slave to read so threatening to slave society?

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***Learning to Read and Write, cont.***

4. Auld also said (about Douglass) “As to himself, it could do him no good, but a great deal of harm. It would make him discontented and unhappy.” Why did Auld believe this? Why would he be afraid of the slaves becoming discontented and unhappy?

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5. Why did the fact that Auld forbade his wife to teach Douglass how to read inspire him with “with a desire and determination to learn”?

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6. Is Douglass’s story relevant today? Are there any situations today in which people are being denied the opportunity to learn?

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7. Both Auld and Douglass believed that the ability to read is extremely powerful. Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

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# Until He Tackled His Illiteracy, the Redskins' Gridiron Terror Lived in Fear of the ABC's

By Dexter Manley  
People magazine,  
9/25/1989



[www.people.com/people/article/0,,20121269,00.html](http://www.people.com/people/article/0,,20121269,00.html)

1. What were some of the emotions Dexter Manley experienced as a child as a result of his inability to read?

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2. What were some of the coping strategies he used to help him deal with his illiteracy?

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3. Do you think his alcoholism and drug problems were a result of his struggles with reading?

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Image from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Washington\\_Redskins\\_\(37157097075\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Washington_Redskins_(37157097075).jpg)

***Until He Tackled His Illiteracy, cont.***

4. What happened that shocked Manley into realizing he had a problem?

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5. What did Manley do when he finally admitted he had a problem?

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6. What adjectives would you use to describe Manley?

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7. Have you ever had similar experiences to any that Manley described?

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# In Praise of Learning

**Bertolt Brecht**

<http://talkingdictionary.clubefl.gr/2011/10/14/in-praise-of-learning-by-bertolt-brecht/>

*Read this poem by Bertolt Brecht after reading the essays by Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass and Dexter Manley. Compare and contrast all these writers' beliefs about the power and importance of literacy.*

**Begin!**  
**You must know everything.**

**You must take over the leadership.**



1. According to the poet, who are all the people who should learn to read?

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2. What are the main reasons given in this poem for learning to read?

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*Image from Creative Commons <https://www.flickr.com/photos/abee5/8314929977>*

***In Praise of Learning, cont.***

3. Are these the reasons usually given in school?

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4. In what way is a book a “weapon”? How does Brecht’s attitude about reading compare with that of Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass, and Dexter Manley?

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5. What does Brecht mean by “What you do not know yourself / you do not know”?

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6. What does he mean when he says “Scrutinize the bill, /it is you who must pay it. / Put your finger on each item, / ask: how did this get there?” Do you agree with this advice? How does this advice relate to your own experience?

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# **Read like a Detective: Compare & Contrast ~ Learning to Read**

## **Evidence-based Writing Practice**

### **PROMPT**

*Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass, Dexter Manley and Bertolt Brecht all discuss the important of learning to read. How are their ideas similar? How are they different? Pick at least two of the essays and compare the authors' experiences and conclusions about the importance of reading. Use evidence from the essays to support your answer.*

*Type your essay.*



### **1. Unpack the prompt:**

Do.....	What.....

### **2. Find evidence:** *(circle what the prompt is directing you to do)*

Argue for / against	Identify Problem / solution	Compare / contrast	Identify Cause / effect
Evidence:		Evidence:	
Evidence:		Evidence:	
Evidence:		Evidence:	

### **3. Evaluate the evidence to determine which is stronger and best supports your argument.**

### **4. Now “write like a reporter.”**

**Write like a Reporter: Compare & Contrast ~ Learning to Read**  
**Evidence-based Writing Practice**

*Evidence-based writing is the use of sufficient and relevant data, studies and facts to support an argument.*

**Introduction**

Based on your evaluation of the evidence, restate the question as a main idea (thesis) statement to set the stage for answering the prompt.

**Body**

Argue for / against

Identify  
Problem / solution

Compare / contrast

Identify  
Cause / effect

Answer the question.  
Provide supporting evidence, details and examples from the text.

**Conclusion**

Restate your position based on the strength of the evidence.

*Remember to edit and revise!*

## Twelve Powerful Words Matching Game

12 Power Words-Maybe be used as definition cards or for a 'matching game' when cut apart.

<b>Analyze</b>	<b>Evaluate</b>	<b>Describe</b>
<i>Break it down into parts. Tell about the parts.</i>	<i>Tell the good and the bad. Judge it.</i>	<i>Tell me about it. Give details about it. Paint a picture with words.</i>
<b>Infer</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Explain</b>
<i>Read between the lines. What is the hidden meaning?</i>	<i>Back up the information. Prove. Provide evidence</i>	<i>Teach me or show me. Tell the steps.</i>
<b>Summarize</b>	<b>Compare</b>	<b>Contrast</b>
<i>Tell the main idea. Tell the beginning, middle, and end</i>	<i>Tell all the ways they are the same.</i>	<i>Tell all the ways they are different.</i>
<b>Predict</b>	<b>Trace</b>	<b>Formulate</b>
<i>Hypothesize Make an educated (smart) guess</i>	<i>Outline. Explain the development. Follow (or explain) the path.</i>	<i>Create. Put together.</i>

Larry Bell's 12 Power Words for Testing (with minor adaptations)  
<http://w4.nkcisd.k12.mo.us/~stc/pdfs/Map%20power%20words.pdf>

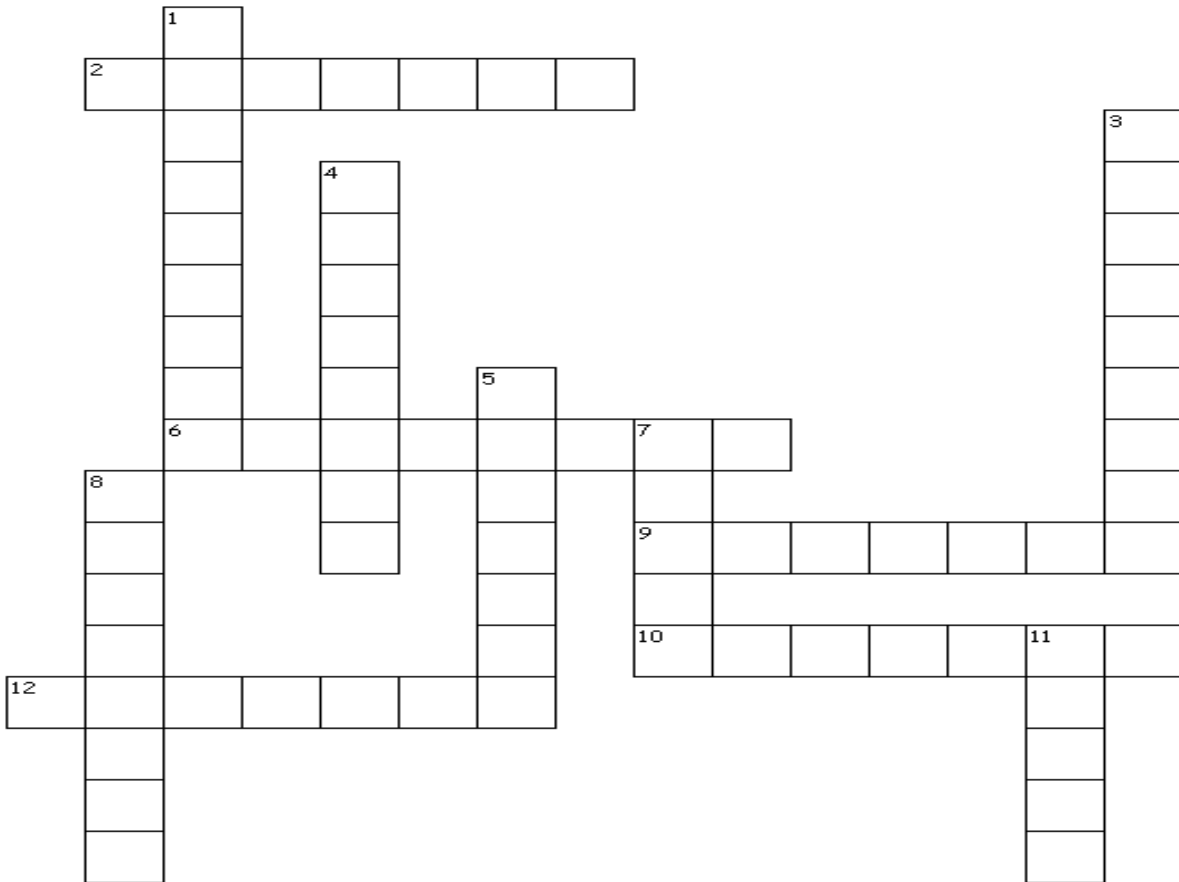
## Twelve Powerful Words Definitions

*These Twelve Powerful Words are important for reading comprehension and for doing well on tests. Knowing these words and being able to use them correctly will help you understand what test questions are asking for, help you use higher order thinking, help relieve test anxiety, and help you be more successful answering questions on standardized tests. Using the Twelve Powerful Words matching game or a dictionary, write the definitions of these terms in your own words.*

<b>Word</b>	<b>Definition in your own words</b>
<b>trace</b>	
<b>analyze</b>	
<b>infer</b>	
<b>evaluate</b>	
<b>formulate</b>	
<b>describe</b>	
<b>support</b>	
<b>explain</b>	
<b>summarize</b>	
<b>compare</b>	
<b>contrast</b>	
<b>predict</b>	

*Adapted from Larry Bell*

# Twelve Powerful Words Puzzle



## Across

- 2. to show how two things are alike
- 6. to make judgments
- 9. to break down into parts in order to examine closely
- 10. to teach how to do something or how something works
- 12. to foretell, to use information in the text to infer future events

## Down

- 1. to create
- 3. to tell the main points in your own words
- 4. to show how two things are different
- 5. to back up with facts
- 7. to outline
- 8. to give details about something
- 11. to figure out based on evidence

# Twelve Powerful Words Search

Q E N C B E A I R O K P V F K X X U E F  
 Q K M W V S G V K E R S R O D W L K B M  
 W P W Y N B K L R E T E U R V R I E I A  
 T S A R T N O C D M C A E M F M O T R G  
 L N K Y O V S I K O Z I U U M H U W C V  
 R E V I E W C S G A B A B L S A E N S I  
 O O M K Y T Z N Y A J F Y A A Y R A E C  
 I N V E S T I G A T E F V T N V P I D Y  
 R R L V D Z P J C K I A D E A P E K Z T  
 T N E L E O K N Q T C O N C L U D E N E  
 L R R S H A R Z N K J N X Y Y M Y W I D  
 K R O J E X L E R A P M O C Z T T Y A U  
 B K O P J A D M Y Y O C W B E R V L L M  
 L B C V P I R V E E I F O V E A K A P D  
 I C U P I U X C K W S O F N F C H E X T  
 W N U N K F S J H F F N I O W E A X E E  
 W Q F O A A H F G U P F U N M I H W X X  
 G H F E T W G X C Z E U E B V H Q V J I  
 X G R X R W N R P D W H C P N V P C E O  
 J Z I Z R Q U L Y F I O V W J S X N F T

ANALYZE  
 APPLY  
 COMPARE  
 CONCLUDE  
 CONTRAST  
 DEFINE  
 DESCRIBE

EVALUATE  
 EXPLAIN  
 FORMULATE  
 IDENTIFY  
 INFER  
 INVESTIGATE  
 PREDICT

RECOGNIZE  
 RESEARCH  
 REVIEW  
 SUMMARIZE  
 SUPPORT  
 TRACE



## IMPORTANT GED & COLLEGE VOCABULARY ~ *Part One*

<b>Affix</b>	A word part that cannot stand alone (such as a prefix or a suffix) that changes the meaning or function of a base word to which it is attached.
<b>Alliteration</b>	The repetition of the same sound, usually of a consonant, at the beginning of two or more words near each other in a phrase. For example: <i>The fields were fresh and full of ferns.</i>
<b>Allusion</b>	A reference to a statement, well-known person, place, or event from literature, history, mythology, politics, sports, science, or the arts.
<b>Analyze</b>	To examine parts of a literary work to understand how they work together to create meaning as a whole.
<b>Antagonist</b>	An important character or force in opposition to a protagonist, or main character. Often, but not always, the villain.
<b>Antonym</b>	A word meaning the opposite of another word.
<b>Argument</b>	A text structure that uses reason to try to lead a reader to think or act in a certain way. It begins with a statement of an idea or opinion, and it is then supported with facts and logical reasoning to achieve its purpose.
<b>Author's bias</b>	A personal judgment or prejudice, either for or against a particular person, position, or thing.
<b>Author's perspective</b>	The viewpoint that an author brings to a piece of writing.
<b>Author's purpose</b>	An author's reason for creating a particular work. It may be to entertain, to explain or to inform, to express an opinion, or to persuade readers to do or believe something.
<b>Base word</b>	A complete word that can stand alone, also known as a root word.
<b>Cause and effect</b>	The reasons for an action and the resulting consequences.
<b>Character development</b>	The method(s) a writer uses to create and develop characters. These may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a character's physical appearance;</li> <li>• the speech, thoughts, feelings, or actions of a character.</li> </ul>
<b>Character point of view</b>	The viewpoint or voice of a character, this helps readers to better understand the events of a text through a character's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, motives, or actions.

<b>Chart</b>	A type of graphic aid that presents informatio, shows a process, or makes comparisons, usually in rows and columns.
<b>Chronological order</b>	The order in which events happen in time (sequence of events).
<b>Compare/contrast</b>	To examine the similarities and differences between two or more subjects.
<b>Compare</b>	To point out what two or more things have in common.
<b>Conflict</b>	A struggle or clash or disagreement between opposing characters, forces, or emotions that moves the plot forward in literary text.
<b>Consumer documents</b>	Printed materials for buyers that accompany products and services. They provide information about use, care, operation, or assembly. Examples include: contracts, warranties, manuals, instructions, package inserts, labels, brochures, and schedules.
<b>Context clues</b>	Words or phrases that surround an unfamiliar word that help readers understand their meanings.
<b>Contrast</b>	To show the dissimilarities and differences between two or more things.
<b>Descriptive language</b>	Language intended to create a mood, person, place, thing, event, emotion, or experience. Uses images that appeal to the reader's senses, helping the reader to imagine how a subject looks, sounds, smells, tastes, or feels.
<b>Diction</b>	A writer's or speaker's choice of words and way of arranging the words in sentences. It can be formal or informal, depending on the author's purpose.
<b>Drawing conclusions</b>	Making inferences by combining what you already know with information from the text to figure out why something happened.
<b>Evaluate</b>	To form opinions about what is read. Through this process readers may develop their own ideas about characters and events.
<b>Excerpt</b>	A short passage or segment taken from a longer text.
<b>Exposition</b>	In the early part of a fictional story, this sets the tone, establishes the setting, introduces the characters, and gives the reader important background information.
<b>External conflict</b>	A struggle between a character and an outside force, which may be another character, society as a whole, or something in nature.
<b>Fact</b>	Knowledge or information that can be verified (proven).

<b>Falling action</b>	The action that occurs after the climax, in which conflicts are resolved and mysteries are solved.
<b>Fiction</b>	Imaginative works of prose, primarily the novel and the short story. Although it may draw on actual events and real people, it springs mainly from the imagination of the writer. The purpose is to entertain and enlighten the reader.
<b>Figurative language</b>	Language that involves the use of words and/or phrases that describe one thing in terms of another and that is not meant to be understood on a literal level. It always involves some sort of imaginative comparison between seemingly unlike things. The most common types are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simile (<i>My heart <u>is like</u> a singing bird.</i>)</li> <li>• metaphor (<i>I <u>am</u> a rock; I am an island.</i>)</li> <li>• personification (<i>The sun smiled down on us.</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Flashback</b>	An interruption in the action of a plot to tell what happened at an earlier time. It breaks the usual movement of the narrative by going back in time and giving background information that helps the reader understand the present situation.
<b>Foreshadowing</b>	A writer's use of hints or clues to suggest events that will occur later in the plot. It creates suspense and prepares the reader for what is to come.
<b>Hyperbole</b>	A figure of speech in which a statement is exaggerated for emphasis or for humorous effect. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I ate a ton of food.</i></li> <li>• <i>He is as strong as an ox.</i></li> <li>• <i>The limousine is a mile long.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Imagery</b>	Language that appeals to the senses. It is used in all types of writing, but especially in poetry. It usually appeals to one or more of the five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch—to help the reader imagine exactly what is being described.
<b>Inference</b>	The act of drawing logical conclusions from information given in a text.
<b>Informational nonfiction</b>	Writing that provides factual information and that often explains ideas or teaches processes.
<b>Internal conflict</b>	A struggle between opposing needs, desires, or emotions <i>within</i> a character.

Adapted from FCAT 2.0 Reading Test Item Specifications, Grades 9–10 Florida Department of Education, Appendix D

## QUIZ ~ IMPORTANT GED & COLLEGE VOCABULARY ~ PART ONE ~ QUIZ

*Write the correct vocabulary word from the box below with its definition.*

Affix Antagonist Author's perspective Character development Compare/contrast Context clues Drawing conclusions External conflict Figurative language Imagery	Alliteration Antonym Author's purpose Character point of view Compare Contrast Evaluate Fact Flashback Inference	Allusion Argument Base word Chart Conflict Descriptive language Excerpt Falling action Foreshadowing Internal conflict	Analyze Author's bias Cause and effect Chronological order Consumer documents Diction Exposition Fiction Hyperbole Informational nonfiction
1		The order in which events happen in time (sequence of events).	
2		An important character or force in opposition to a protagonist, or main character. Often, but not always, the villain.	
3		An interruption in the action of a plot to tell what happened at an earlier time. It breaks the usual movement of the narrative by going back in time and giving background information that helps the reader understand the present situation.	
4		The repetition of the same sound, usually of a consonant, at the beginning of two or more words near each other in a phrase. Example: <i>The fields were fresh and full of ferns.</i>	
5		A reference to a statement, well-known person, place, or event from literature, history, mythology, politics, sports, science, or the arts.	
6		A type of graphic aid that presents information, shows a process, or makes comparisons, usually in rows and columns.	
7		A short passage or segment taken from a longer text.	
8		A text structure that uses reason to try to lead a reader to think or act in a certain way. It begins with a statement of an idea or opinion, and it is then supported with facts and logical reasoning to achieve its purpose.	
9		A personal judgment or prejudice, either for or against a particular person, position, or thing.	
10		A word part that cannot stand alone (such as a prefix or a suffix) that changes the meaning or function of a base word to which it is attached.	

11		To examine parts of a literary work to understand how they work together to create meaning as a whole.
12		The viewpoint that an author brings to a piece of writing.
13		A word meaning the opposite of another word.
14		To point out what two or more things have in common.
15		Imaginative works of prose, primarily the novel and the short story. Although it may draw on actual events and real people, it springs mainly from the imagination of the writer. The purpose is to entertain as well as enlighten the reader.
16		A complete word that can stand alone, also known as a root word.
17		To examine the similarities and differences between two or more subjects.
18		Printed materials for buyers that accompany products and services. They provide information about use, care, operation, or assembly. Examples include: contracts, warranties, manuals, instructions, package inserts, labels, brochures, and schedules.
19		An author's reason for creating a particular work. It may be to entertain, to explain or to inform, to express an opinion, or to persuade readers to do or believe something.
20		A struggle between a character and an outside force, which may be another character, society as a whole, or something in nature.
21		To show the dissimilarities and differences between two or more things.
22		To form opinions or make a judgment about what is read. Through this process readers develop their own ideas about characters and events.
23		A writer's or speaker's choice of words and way of arranging the words in sentences. It can be formal or informal, depending on the author's purpose.
24		Words or phrases that surround an unfamiliar word that help readers understand their meanings.

25		<p>A figure of speech in which a statement is exaggerated for emphasis or for humorous effect. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I ate a ton of food</li> <li>• He is as strong as an ox</li> <li>• The limousine is a mile long.</li> </ul>
26		<p>The method(s) a writer uses to create and develop characters. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a character's physical appearance;</li> <li>• the speech, thoughts, feelings, or actions of a character.</li> </ul>
27		Knowledge or information that can be verified (proven).
28		Making inferences by combining what you already know with information from the text to figure out why something happened.
29		A struggle or clash or disagreement between opposing characters, forces, or emotions that moves the plot forward in literary text.
30		The viewpoint or voice of a character, this helps readers to better understand the events of a text through a character's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, motives, or actions.
31		The action that occurs after the climax, in which conflicts are resolved and mysteries are solved.
32		<p>Language that involves the use of words and/or phrases that describe one thing in terms of another and that is not meant to be understood on a literal level. It always involves some sort of imaginative comparison between seemingly unlike things.</p> <p>The most common types are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simile (<i>My heart <u>is like</u> a singing bird.</i>)</li> <li>• metaphor (<i>I <u>am</u> a rock; I am an island.</i>)</li> <li>• personification (<i>The sun smiled down on us.</i>)</li> </ul>
33		A writer's use of hints or clues to suggest events that will occur later in the plot. It creates suspense and prepares the reader for what is to come.
34		In the early part of a fictional story, this sets the tone, establishes the setting, introduces the characters, and gives the reader important background information.

35		The act of drawing logical conclusions from information given in a text.
36		Language that appeals to the senses. It is used in all types of writing, but especially in poetry. It usually appeals to one or more of the five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch—to help the reader imagine exactly what is being described.
37		A struggle between opposing needs, desires, or emotions <i>within</i> a character.
38		Writing that provides factual information and that often explains ideas or teaches processes.
39		Language intended to create a mood, person, place, thing, event, emotion, or experience. Uses images that appeal to the reader's senses, helping the reader to imagine how a subject looks, sounds, smells, tastes, or feels.
40		The reason something happens and the consequence that occurs as a result.

*Adapted from FCAT 2.0 Reading Test Item Specifications, Grades 9–10 Florida DOE, Appendix D*

## IMPORTANT GED & COLLEGE VOCABULARY ~ *Part Two*

<b>Irony</b>	A surprising contrast between what is expected and what actually exists or happens.
<b>Implied main idea</b>	The main idea of a passage or an article that is not directly stated but formed or inferred from what is suggested by the supporting details.
<b>Interpret</b>	To translate, analyze, or give examples drawn from a text. This process involves making an inference beyond the literal meaning of a text in order to determine meaning.
<b>Main idea</b>	The most important idea expressed in a piece of writing. It may be the central idea of an entire work or a thought expressed in the topic sentence of a paragraph.
<b>Metaphor</b>	A comparison of two things that have some quality in common. Unlike a simile, it does not contain a word such as <i>like</i> , <i>as</i> , <i>than</i> , or <i>resembles</i> . Instead, it states that one thing actually is something else.
<b>Mood</b>	The feeling or atmosphere that a writer creates for the reader. The use of connotation, details, imagery, figurative language, foreshadowing, setting, and rhythm can help establish mood.
<b>Moral</b>	A lesson taught in a literary work, such as a fable.
<b>Myth</b>	A traditional story that deals with basic questions about the universe. They often contain heroes and gods and often attempt to explain such things as the origin of the world, mysteries of nature, or social customs.
<b>Nonfiction</b>	Writing that tells about real people, places, and events. Some examples are newspaper articles, movie reviews, speeches, true-life adventure stories, biographies, advertising, and more.
<b>Paraphrase</b>	To restate a written passage or a quote in one's own words.
<b>Personification</b>	A type of figurative language in which a nonhuman thing or animal is written about as if it were human. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The stars were shivering.</li> <li>• The trees listened.</li> <li>• The mountains wondered why.</li> </ul>
<b>Perspective</b>	A position from which something is considered or evaluated; standpoint or point of view.
<b>Plot</b>	The action or sequence of events in a story. There are five basic elements in a story: (a) exposition; (b) rising action; (c) climax; (d) falling action; and (e) resolution.



<b>Point of view</b>	The vantage point from which a writer tells a story. The three main vantage points in literary texts are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• omniscient</li> <li>• third-person limited</li> <li>• first person.</li> </ul>
<b>Predict</b>	To gather and use text clues to make a reasonable guess or hypothesis about what will happen next in a story.
<b>Prefix</b>	A word part attached in the beginning of a root word to change its meaning. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>-pre in premature</i></li> <li>• <i>-re in reheat</i></li> <li>• <i>-dis in dishonest</i></li> <li>• <i>-un in unwise</i></li> </ul>
<b>Primary source</b>	Materials written by people who were present at events, either as participants or as observers. Letters, diaries, autobiographies, speeches, and photographs are examples of primary sources.
<b>Protagonist</b>	The main character in fiction or drama. The character who sets the plot in motion. Often, but not always, the hero in a literary work.
<b>Relevant details</b>	Meaningful or important facts that provide information that supports the author's main point.
<b>Resolution</b>	The portion of a play or story where the central problem is solved. It comes after the climax and falling action and is intended to bring the story to a satisfactory end, including and insight or a change.
<b>Rising action</b>	The events in a story that move the plot forward. Rising action involves conflicts and complications and builds toward the climax of the story.
<b>Sarcasm</b>	A form of verbal irony, usually harsh or mocking, that is often used as an insult.
<b>Satire</b>	Type of writing that ridicules human weakness, vice, or folly in order to bring about social reform. This type of writing is often used to persuade the reader to do or believe something by showing the opposite view as absurd. For example, George Orwell's satire <i>Animal Farm</i> uses barnyard animals to mock the way people abuse political power.
<b>Secondary source</b>	Records of events that were created after the events occurred; the writers were not directly involved or were not present when the events took place. Encyclopedias, textbooks, biographies, most newspaper and magazine articles, and books and articles that interpret or review research are examples.

<b>Setting</b>	The time and place of the action in a story, play, or poem.
<b>Simile</b>	A comparison of two things that have some quality in common. The comparison is conveyed by means of the word <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> . For example: “ <i>She stood in front of the altar, shaking like a freshly caught trout.</i> ” —Maya Angelou
<b>Suffix</b>	A word part that is added to the end of a root word, forming a new word. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>-ness in gentleness</i></li> <li>• <i>-ing in walking</i></li> <li>• <i>-ful in helpful</i></li> </ul>
<b>Symbolism</b>	The use of something concrete (e.g., an object, a setting, an event, an animal, or a person) to represent something abstract or universal. For example, dark night might be used in a poem to portray death.
<b>Synonym</b>	A word that has the same or almost the same meaning as another word. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>rob / steal</i></li> <li>• <i>occasionally / sometimes</i></li> <li>• <i>large / enormous</i></li> </ul>
<b>Synthesize</b>	To combine or put together information from two or more places or sources in order to identify the relationships among two or more ideas.
<b>Table</b>	A type of graphic aid that presents a group of facts in rows and columns and demonstrates how the facts interrelate.
<b>Theme</b>	An underlying message about life or human nature that the author wants the reader to understand and that may give readers insight into the author’s view of the world.
<b>Topic</b>	The subject matter of a conversation or piece of writing. What an essay or article is about.

*Adapted from FCAT 2.0 Reading Test Item Specifications, Grades 9–10 Florida DOE, Appendix D*

## QUIZ ~ IMPORTANT GED & COLLEGE VOCABULARY ~ PART TWO ~ QUIZ

Write the correct vocabulary word from the box below with its definition.

Irony	Implied main idea	Interpret	Main idea	Topic
Metaphor	Mood	Moral	Myth	Nonfiction
Paraphrase	Personification	Perspective	Plot	Point of view
Predict	Prefix	Primary source	Protagonist	Relevant details
Resolution	Rising action	Sarcasm	Satire	Secondary source
Setting	Simile	Suffix	Symbolism	Synonym
Synthesize	Table	Theme		
1		Materials written by people who were present at events, either as participants or as observers. Letters, diaries, autobiographies, speeches, and photographs are examples of primary sources.		
2		Type of writing that ridicules human weakness, vice, or folly in order to bring about social reform. This type of writing is often used to persuade the reader to do or believe something by showing the opposite view as absurd. For example, George Orwell's satire <i>Animal Farm</i> uses barnyard animals to mock the way people abuse political power.		
3		A comparison of two things that have some quality in common. Unlike a simile, it does not contain a word such as <i>like</i> , <i>as</i> , <i>than</i> , or <i>resembles</i> . Instead, it states that one thing actually is something else.		
4		The portion of a play or story where the central problem is solved. It comes after the climax and falling action and is intended to bring the story to a satisfactory end, including and insight or a change.		
5		Writing that tells about real people, places, and events. Some examples are newspaper articles, movie reviews, speeches, true-life adventure stories, biographies, advertising, and more.		
6		A lesson taught in a literary work, such as a fable.		
7		The action or sequence of events in a story. There are five basic elements in a story: (a) exposition; (b) rising action; (c) climax; (d) falling action; and (e) resolution.		
8		A position from which something is considered or evaluated; standpoint or point of view.		

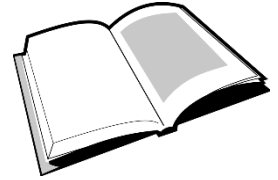
9	Records of events that were created after the events occurred; the writers were not directly involved or were not present when the events took place. Encyclopedias, textbooks, biographies, most newspaper and magazine articles, and books and articles that interpret or review research are examples.
10	The time and place of the action in a story, play, or poem.
11	The feeling or atmosphere that a writer creates for the reader. The use of connotation, details, imagery, figurative language, foreshadowing, setting, and rhythm can help establish mood.
12	The use of something concrete (e.g., an object, a setting, an event, an animal, or a person) to represent something abstract or universal. For example, dark night might be used in a poem to portray death.
13	To combine or put together information from two or more places or sources in order to identify the relationships among two or more ideas.
14	A type of graphic aid that presents a group of facts in rows and columns and demonstrates how the facts interrelate.
15	The events in a story that move the plot forward. Rising action involves conflicts and complications and builds toward the climax of the story.
16	To restate a written passage or a quote in one's own words.
17	A word part attached in the beginning of a root word to change its meaning. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>-pre in premature</i></li> <li>• <i>-re in reheat</i></li> <li>• <i>-dis in dishonest</i></li> <li>• <i>-un in unwise</i></li> </ul>
18	A surprising contrast between what is expected and what actually exists or happens.
19	A comparison of two things that have some quality in common. The comparison is conveyed by means of the word <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> . For example: " <i>She stood in front of the altar, shaking like a freshly caught trout.</i> " —Maya Angelou

20		The most important idea expressed in a piece of writing. It may be the central idea of an entire work or a thought expressed in the topic sentence of a paragraph.
21		The vantage point from which a writer tells a story. The three main vantage points in literary texts are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• omniscient</li> <li>• third-person limited</li> <li>• first person.</li> </ul>
22		A word that has the same or almost the same meaning as another word. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>rob / steal</i></li> <li>• <i>occasionally / sometimes</i></li> <li>• <i>large / enormous</i></li> </ul>
23		The main idea of a passage or an article that is not directly stated but formed or inferred from what is suggested by the supporting details.
24		To gather and use text clues to make a reasonable guess or hypothesis about what will happen next in a story.
25		To translate, analyze, or give examples drawn from a text. This process involves making an inference beyond the literal meaning of a text in order to determine meaning.
26		A word part that is added to the end of a root word, forming a new word. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>-ness in gentleness</i></li> <li>• <i>-ing in walking</i></li> <li>• <i>-ful in helpful</i></li> </ul>
27		A traditional story that deals with basic questions about the universe. They often contain heroes and gods and often attempt to explain such things as the origin of the world, mysteries of nature, or social customs.
28		A form of verbal irony, usually harsh or mocking, that is often used as an insult.
29		An underlying message about life or human nature that the author wants the reader to understand and that may give readers insight into the author's view of the world.

30		The subject matter of a conversation or piece of writing. What an essay or article is about.
31		A type of figurative language in which a nonhuman thing or animal is written about as if it were human. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The stars were shivering.</li> <li>• The trees listened.</li> <li>• The mountains wondered why.</li> </ul>
32		The main character in fiction or drama. The character who sets the plot in motion. Often, but not always, the hero in a literary work.
33		Meaningful or important facts that provide information that supports the author's main point.

*Adapted from FCAT 2.0 Reading Test Item Specifications, Grades 9–10 Florida DOE, Appendix D*

# BOOK SUMMARY



Name of reader \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Fill in the blanks. Then retype your book summary to prepare to share it with the class.*

\*\*\*\*\*

The **title** of the book is \_\_\_\_\_.

The **author's** name is \_\_\_\_\_.

The **genre** of the book is \_\_\_\_\_.

fiction / biography / autobiography / science non-fiction / history non-fiction /  
poetry / religion / anthology / other

\*\*\*\*\*

I chose this book because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

\*\*\*\*\*

This book is about (**summarize** the story or the main idea) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (continue on back)

**Book Summary, cont.**

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The **setting** of the story is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

One of the main **characters** in the book is \_\_\_\_\_  
and his / her most **noteworthy qualities** are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Another one of the main **characters** in the book is \_\_\_\_\_  
and his / her most **noteworthy qualities** are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

\*\*\*\*\*

The best part of the book was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

\*\*\*\*\*

I **would / would not** recommend this book to others because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



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# Words of Wisdom: Critical Thinking

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*Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.*  
William Butler Yeats

*Problems are sent to us as gifts.*  
Asian Proverb

*Every now and then a man's mind is stretched by a new idea or sensation,  
and it never shrinks back to its former dimensions.*  
Oliver Wendell Holmes

*When solving problems, dig at the roots instead of just hacking at the leaves.*  
Anthony J. D'Angelo

*To every complex question there is a simple answer and it is wrong...*  
H.L. Mencken

*Men become civilized, not in proportion to their willingness to believe,  
but in their readiness to doubt.*  
H. L. Mencken

*No great discovery is ever made without a bold guess.*  
Isaac Newton

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# Critical Thinking Reflection

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*Pick a quote that intrigues you. Write about the quote, reflecting on:*

- *what you think the speaker means*
- *whether you agree or disagree and why or why not*
- *how the quote is or is not relevant to your life*
- *specific examples from your life or the lives of others which highlight its meaning*

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# The Importance of Critical Thinking Skills



Critical thinking is the key to doing well in college. In addition, people who think critically and who evaluate what they see, hear and read are far better equipped to evaluate their life choices, address social problems, make judgments about community issues and evaluate the decisions of politicians, bosses and community leaders.

It is each of our right -- indeed our responsibility -- to question. We need always to be willing to ask why things are the way they are. To participate in a democracy, we must be able to evaluate critically what we observe and learn, and trust in our own right and ability to do so.

Critical thinking is vital to college-level study. Information attained in college is not just a collection of facts to be memorized and repeated; the information you will engage with in college will require interpretation, careful judgment and evaluation. In reading, writing and research activities, you will use critical thinking skills.

Critical thinking is intricately connected to creative thinking. Solving real life problems involves moving back and forth between developing innovative solutions and critically evaluating them and weighing their consequences. Creative thinking involves the generation of ideas, processes or experiences; critical thinking involves the evaluation of these ideas.

Learning how to engage in critical thinking enables us to sort through our emotions to arrive at solutions. Critical thinking helps us distinguish fact from opinion and categorize our experiences in order to discover truths. Critical thinking skills can empower us to express ourselves clearly and logically in order to persuade others. People who think critically are more likely to be able to resist being manipulated or feeling confused. Critical thinkers can make judgments based on evidence and facts. Critical thinkers make connections between what they learn and what they experience. Critical thinkers always ask questions.

# Strategies for Building Critical Thinking Skills

## 1. Use Active Listening

Whenever you are in a learning situation (and most situations provide us with opportunities to learn) try to listen without interrupting. Listen to other students, teachers and speakers and rephrase what you hear in your own words.

Good listeners make sure they understand and can accurately summarize what was said before they evaluate or criticize.

When listening, engage yourself fully by uses these techniques:

- **Look at the speaker.**
- **Listen to the speaker's tone, feeling and mannerisms**
- **Decide to be interested.**
- **Take notes.**
- **Ask questions for clarification.**
- **Ask questions for more information.**
- **Ask questions of application.**
- **Be aware of your own thoughts, feelings and ideas.**

### **ACTIVE LISTENING / Try this:**

*Listen to a story. Listen attentively and with full concentration because you will be asked to discuss the main idea and the details after the story is finished.*

## 2. Brainstorm

Brainstorming is a creativity technique designed to help you come up with a large number of possible solutions to a problem. Use these steps to generate lots of ideas:



- 1. Pose a clear question.** Whether you are brainstorming by yourself or in a group, decide what the question or problem is you are trying to generate ideas about.
- 2. Don't censor yourself or fellow group members.** There is no such thing as a bad idea. Come up with as many ideas as you can and don't criticize yourself for any of them. You can always eliminate less sensible ideas later, but at this point, put them down. One idea often leads to another.
- 3. Have fun.** If you're relaxed and enjoying yourself, you'll have more success at brainstorming.
- 4. Extend your ideas.** Expand your ideas by adapting, enlarging, modifying and combining them. Ideas breed more ideas.
- 5. Try to fill a page.** When you feel stuck, take a short break or ask a different question in order to keep yourself going.

After brainstorming, review the list to evaluate and judge the ideas. Make sure that what you have written is clear and that everyone in the group understands what all the ideas mean. Combine similar ideas into one. Discuss which ideas best address the problem until you can defend it.

### **GROUP BRAINSTORM / Try this:**

*Imagine that you are taking a college history course. The class is difficult and your grades are low. Your goal is to get a B in the class. In a small group, brainstorm all the things you can do to ensure that you get a B. Try to come up with at least ten ideas. Use the guidelines listed above.*

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## **3. Ask Questions**

*Asking questions enables us as listeners and readers to engage with the information we are learning. It gives us tools for going deeper, getting relevant facts, understanding better and making decisions and judgments. Use a variety of questioning strategies:*

**1 Write lists of questions BEFORE a learning activity:**

- ~ What do I want to know?
- ~ What am I curious about?
- ~ What have I always wondered about but was afraid to ask?

**2 Ask different types of questions DURING a learning activity:**

- Ask purpose questions: *Ask -- why was this written? Whom was it written for? What is the desired effect?*
- Ask clarification questions: *Ask for examples. Ask for an explanation of the main idea. Ask how the details are connected to the main idea.*
- Ask assumption questions: *Look at the values that underlie the information. What does the text take for granted? Are these assumptions correct?*
- Ask analysis questions: *Make inferences, draw conclusions, analyze cause and effect. Ask -- what conclusions can I draw about this? What is the evidence?*
- Ask synthesis questions: *Ask -- what changes could I make to this? How would I improve this? Can we predict what the outcome will be?*
- Ask accuracy and evidence questions: *Evaluate whether an argument is supported by facts and whether more detail is needed. Ask -- how could we find out whether or not that is true? Is there reason to doubt that evidence?*
- Ask logic questions: *Does the argument make sense? Does all the information add up? Is it coherent and reasonably organized?*
- Ask evaluation questions: *Draw on your own knowledge to make judgments and determine value. Ask -- what is my opinion? Do I agree with this and why?*

**3 Ask questions AFTER a learning activity:**

- ~ What wasn't clear?
- ~ What else do I need to know?
- ~ Where can I find more information?

# Watch Out for “Uncritical Thinking”

*It is not unusual to hear someone speak or to read a passage and to think, "That doesn't make sense!" "That's not true!" Or "they didn't tell the whole story!" Uncritical thinking is everywhere. Be on the lookout for common incidents of non-logical and non-critical thinking.*

Can you think of examples of these types of "uncritical thinking"?

**Generalizations** -- Generalizations are unfair or exaggerated statements about people, groups or ideas. If we say “all people” or “everyone” or “always,” we are almost always using a generalization.

**Oversimplification** -- When we oversimplify, we describe something in a way that leaves out important details or omits complicated truths.

**Stereotypes** -- Stereotypes are generalizations about people, groups, nationalities or religious groups based on a few oversimplified characteristics. Stereotypes deny the individuality, complexity and diversity of people.

**Understatement** – An understatement minimizes the size or importance of something, suggesting that it is less significant than it actually is.

**Exaggeration** – An exaggeration is an overstatement, suggesting that something is more than it really is.

**Slant / bias** -- If an argument is "slanted" or shows "bias," the speaker interprets all information from one point of view, without being willing to present a balanced perspective.

**Jumping to conclusions** -- Jumping to conclusions is the act of making decisions or forming opinions without looking for evidence or proof.

**Underlying assumptions** -- Assumptions are ideas that are taken for granted and not based on evidence or research, but on unproven beliefs.

**Absolutes** -- Absolutes are statements that don't allow for uncertainty, exceptions or questioning. Statements that include "always" and "never" are absolutes.

**Opinions as facts** -- There are a wide variety of opinions, derived from experience and perspective, and more than one is usually valid. Facts are objective and can be proven.

**Watch Out for "Uncritical Thinking," cont.**

Read the following sentences to identify "uncritical thinking." Discuss with a partner which type of non-logical or non-critical thinking is being used in each sentence.

1. A few people were harmed during World War II. \_\_\_\_\_
2. If we make marijuana legal, there won't be any more crime. \_\_\_\_\_
3. All people from Canada are brilliant. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Kids who wear their pants low are a bunch of criminals. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Everyone who watches that TV station is an idiot. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Police officers who racially profile should be fired, and that's a fact. \_\_\_\_\_
7. If the President cuts taxes, the economy will improve. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Problems with the health care system can be easily fixed. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Christians should never lie. \_\_\_\_\_
10. The vast majority of Americans voted for President Obama. \_\_\_\_\_
11. It'll take a million years for men to overcome sexist ideas. \_\_\_\_\_
12. People who have health problems don't take care of themselves. \_\_\_\_\_
13. A representative of Camel Cigarette Company cited research to prove that there is no connection between smoking and cancer. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Life was better in the nineties than it is today. \_\_\_\_\_
15. All Italians are good at math. \_\_\_\_\_
16. I'm from the United States, so I know firsthand that Americans are the smartest people in the world. \_\_\_\_\_
17. The ocean is kind of big. \_\_\_\_\_
18. It's a small world. \_\_\_\_\_
19. Life is easy. \_\_\_\_\_



Image from [http://www.publicdomainfiles.com/show\\_file.php?id=13548459018932](http://www.publicdomainfiles.com/show_file.php?id=13548459018932)



## 🌀 **Apply Critical Thinking Skills to Real Life Problems** 🌀

*Over and over again we are confronted with real-life problems that require critical thinking and creative solutions.*

There are four steps that can be useful in solving problems:

1. Make sure you understand the problem.
2. Brainstorm to pose solutions.
3. Try out possible solutions.
4. Check your results to evaluate whether your solution worked or whether something different should be tried.

*Evaluate yourself. When you are faced with a problem, how do you deal with it?*

yes	no	some- times	<b>Do you:</b>
			Do you seek additional information in order to have more options?
			Do you seek other people's opinions?
			Do you take time to think about the causes of the problem?
			Do you brainstorm a variety of solutions before springing to action?
			Do you take time to evaluate your ideas before springing to action?
			Do you take time to evaluate your actions after you act?

How do you come up with creative solutions to personal problems?

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What would you like to do differently when handling personal problems?

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# Higher Order Thinking Skills (H.O.T.S.)

There is more to thinking than just thinking! When we learn something new, we use a variety of skills to engage with the material. Many of the skills build upon each other and help to deepen our understanding of what we learn.



**Knowledge** is the foundation level of higher order thinking. The ability to use knowledge is the ability to:

- understand what you read and hear
- restate information
- summarize ideas
- paraphrase information
- make inferences about what you read and hear
- translate information into new contexts
- draw conclusions about the information you read or hear

**Application** is the ability to use information from one context in another context. The ability to apply information allows one to:

- produce reports
- construct arguments
- use information in new situations
- identify generalizations
- apply general information to specific situations
- apply abstractions to problems

**Analysis** is the ability to break down information and explore relationships between ideas. Analysis skills enable one to:

- distinguish between fact and opinion
- recognize persuasive arguments
- recognize unstated assumptions
- identify cause and effect
- compare and contrast



*Image from Creative Commons [https://pixabay.com/en/photos/thoughtful/?image\\_type=vector](https://pixabay.com/en/photos/thoughtful/?image_type=vector)*

**Higher Order Thinking Skills, cont.**

**Synthesis** is the ability to bring together information one has learned in order to produce new information. With this skill, one can:

- make generalizations
- make hypotheses
- design plans
- offer creative solutions to problems
- relate knowledge from various areas
- make predictions

**Evaluation** is the ability to use information to make judgments. One who evaluates can:

- assess the accuracy of facts
- compare and contrast versions of events
- determine point of view
- make recommendations
- critically appraise the value of an argument or idea
- examine ideas in an historical context
- recognize the role values play in arguments
- recognize logical fallacies
- make choices



*In small groups, read the definitions of each of the higher-order thinking skills and write an example of an activity from daily life which involves this type of thinking. Share your examples with the class.*

**Knowledge** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Higher Order Thinking Skills, cont.**

**Application** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Analysis** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Synthesis** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Evaluation** \_\_\_\_\_

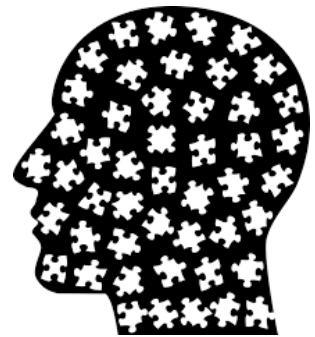
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# How to Overcome Test Anxiety

Adapted from <http://theconversation.com/how-to-overcome-exam-anxiety-67445>

- Do you often think you are going to fail an exam?
- Do you feel like your mind freezes during tests?
- Do you find yourself thinking “I really can’t do this”?
- Does your heart race fast or do you find it hard to breathe during exams?



Most people feel anxious when taking a test, but research shows that some people are more likely to suffer from exam anxiety than others. So why is this? And what can you do to calm your nerves?

## Vocabulary

*Study the words below before reading the article, then refer back to the list if necessary while you are reading.*

**cognitive:** relating to brain activity such as thinking, reasoning and remembering

**debilitate:** to make weak or feeble

**decline:** to descend or go down

**endure:** to go through something difficult without giving in

**evoke:** to bring or call to mind

**intense:** strong or extreme

**intrusive:** coming without invitation or welcome

**optimal:** best or most favorable

**perceive:** to know, recognize, understand, or be aware of

**systematic desensitization:** a treatment for fears where the patient works with the idea that gives them anxiety a little at a time and is taught relaxation techniques

*Image from Creative Commons <https://pixabay.com/en/photos/exam/>*

## ***How to Overcome Test Anxiety, cont.***

### **What is exam anxiety?**

Exam anxiety is the experience of feeling an intense moment of fear or panic before and/or during an exam or assessment.

There are two types of anxiety:

- **Low anxiety:** Students who experience low anxiety may feel a little nervous about an upcoming exam but are still able to focus their attention on their studies or the questions asked during the assessment. Usually low anxiety students are not struck with intrusive thoughts or feel debilitated by the exam.
- **High anxiety:** Students who experience high anxiety show an immediate anxiety reaction when exposed to the feared test situation. They attempt to avoid the situation by not showing up to the exam, or may endure it but with extreme fear. High anxiety can tip some into a sense of panic: "I just really can't do this!"

Students with either high or low anxiety can respond to tests in different ways. But research shows that managing anxiety effectively can actually help with exam performance.

The challenge is to recognize when your anxiety has increased past an optimal level so that it starts to impact your ability to complete the exam - this is a high level of anxiety.

Some physical responses of high anxiety include a speeding heart, damp hands, shortness or rapid breath, and feeling queasy.

The physical response is usually experienced in high levels of anxiety when the "fight or flight" response is triggered. This is how our bodies respond to a perceived threat - and while uncomfortable, it is not harmful.

### **When anxiety is (and isn't) useful**

Anxiety can be useful in certain situations - for example, if you are in danger (jumping out of the way of a car). It can also help to increase our attention to the threatening event and improve our response. But it is not so helpful when the threat we are faced with is cognitive, like a test.

### ***How to Overcome Test Anxiety, cont.***

The thoughts involved in exam anxiety usually include negative thinking about performance (also known as worry) and/or the physical reaction to thinking about the upcoming exam: “I’m going to fail”, “I quit”, “My heart is leaping out of my chest and I can’t focus.”

## **Impact of high anxiety on performance**

Research has shown that people who experience high levels of anxiety in exams can also see their performance decline in evaluation situations.

These people tend to perceive exams as threatening and respond with intense emotional responses, making it difficult to focus on the task at hand.

Assessment situations also evoke worry responses that interfere with effective performance on cognitive and intellectual tasks. This then impacts on the person’s chance of performing their best on the exam.

Exam anxiety may also interfere with your ability to show your academic and cognitive capabilities.

### **So, how can I cool my exam nerves?**

If you identify high anxiety in yourself, you can learn ways to manage it so that it doesn’t take over your exam performance.



The skills you find most helpful in managing your exam anxiety will vary depending on what triggers may be contributing to your high levels of anxiety. If students experience high levels of anxiety before an exam, they should engage in self-care strategies during this time by keeping an eye on sleeping through the night, nutrition, exercise, and implementing a few relaxation routines.

Students sometimes forget these small steps if they feel consumed by fear of the exam.

## **Relaxation training**

There are a range of techniques to help manage test anxiety. The goals of the techniques are to help students understand the nature of their anxiety so that they can cope more effectively with upcoming evaluations. This may include behavioral intervention that aims to teach relaxation training like mindfulness.

*Images from Creative Commons <https://pixabay.com/en/photos/exam/> and <https://picryl.com/media/meditation-meditating-black-beauty-fashion-a04cf2>*

### ***How to Overcome Test Anxiety, cont.***

Mindfulness is where a student tries to focus on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting their anxious feelings, thoughts, and physical reactions.

Relaxation training can be used alongside a process of **systematic desensitization** – this is where a person visualizes a scene while completely relaxed, and the mental image evokes some of the feelings of the real scene.



The idea is that if you learn to relax while visualizing yourself taking the exam, you can also learn to be relaxed while actually taking the exam.

### **Extra Support**

Some students who experience high levels of anxiety about testing can access additional support. This varies based on the individual needs of the student. Some students may need access to a separate room to complete tests, regular breaks during the exam, or more time. To access this type of support, contact your school's guidance counselor or a psychologist to help develop an individualized plan for you during the exam.

Learning to work through test anxiety can have a number of positive effects, including:

- Improved academic performance
- Reduction in stress and distress
- Increased sense of control and confidence
- Decreased frustration

### **Tips for coping with test anxiety**

When getting ready for a test, try to:

- Prepare ahead of time by working on sections of the content each day
- Identify your anxiety early by noticing your physical responses
- Try replacing unhelpful thoughts with more encouraging self-talk by challenging your worried and negative thoughts
- Practice focusing your attention on the task at hand (mindfulness), rather than getting tangled in your anxiety and thinking of the “what if?”
- Learn a few skills for reducing your physical reactions of anxiety
- Remember good self-care: pay attention to your sleep, nutrition, exercise, relaxation routines, and reach out for social support



***How to Overcome Test Anxiety, cont.***

**Comprehension Questions**

3. What is exam anxiety?
  - a. feeling a speeding heart rate or shortness of breath
  - b. feeling intense fear or panic before or during a test
  - c. having your mind freeze during an exam
  - d. not being able to focus on a test
  
4. When is anxiety considered to be high level?
  - a. when it can be managed effectively
  - b. when it improves your response to a dangerous situation
  - c. when it lets you focus on your studies
  - d. when it starts to affect your ability to complete the exam
  
5. Which of the following is a physical response of high level anxiety?
  - a. not being able to focus
  - b. saying, "I quit"
  - c. speeding heart
  - d. thinking, "I'm going to fail"
  
6. In which situation could anxiety be helpful?
  - a. before an important interview
  - b. before meeting someone new
  - c. when being chased or attacked
  - d. when taking a test
  
7. Which of the following is **NOT** an example of self-care from the passage?
  - a. eating healthy
  - b. exercising
  - c. having a dessert after a test
  - d. sleeping through the night
  
8. What is mindfulness?
  - a. a type of breathing exercise
  - b. focusing on the present and accepting anxious feelings
  - c. journaling or talking to a therapist or counselor
  - d. visualizing your stressors so you know how to handle them later

***How to Overcome Test Anxiety, cont.***

9. People with high level anxiety usually see exams as...
- a. a challenge
  - b. a chance to measure their growth
  - c. a manageable evaluation
  - d. a threatening situation

8. What is the difference between low anxiety and high anxiety? Use details from the passage to support your answer.

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9. Read the section, "Tips for coping with test anxiety." Which tip do you think could be the most helpful for someone who is going through test anxiety? Use examples to support your answer.

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## How to Handle Anxiety: Situation Cards

*Anxiety is a normal part of life. It is important to know how to handle situations which cause anxiety. Read the situations listed on the cards and work in pairs or small groups to determine what strategies could be used to cope with the anxiety the person is feeling. Discuss why you chose the strategies you did and how the strategies would help.*

### Possible Coping Strategies

- breathing exercises
- exercise or stretch
- take breaks between sections
- practice positive thoughts
- prepare a little bit each day instead of cramming the night before
- mindfulness (focus on the task at hand)
- take some time to relax before and after the test
- eat healthy
- get a good night's sleep
- practice tests / mock interviews
- journal about your anxiety

<p><b>A.</b></p> <p>Jason knows that he has to take the TABE today in class. He feels a little nervous because he really wants his score to go up, but he knows he will be able to finish the test.</p>	<p><b>B.</b></p> <p>Tomorrow is the day that Adriana is supposed to take the GED. She is having trouble falling asleep because of nightmares about failing the test. She wakes up in a sweat with her heart racing.</p>
<p><b>C.</b></p> <p>Maria is set to meet with her parole board later this morning. Her breathing is very fast. Maria hasn't been able to eat anything because she started throwing up.</p>	<p><b>D.</b></p> <p>Carlos feels butterflies in his stomach before his job interview. He can't tell if it's excitement or nerves, but he is confident that he can do well in this interview.</p>

<p><b>E.</b></p> <p>Crystal has a job interview today! On the way to the meeting, she starts to feel short of breath. Her mind is racing, and she considers canceling the interview all together. She feels shaky as she walks into the interview.</p>	<p><b>F.</b></p> <p>Samantha took longer with her TABE test this afternoon than she usually does. She kept blanking on random questions and making herself nervous. She was still able to finish on time and her score did not go down.</p>
<p><b>G.</b></p> <p>Today is Rick’s first day back in class after eleven years. He’s been jumpy all day and can’t seem to slow down his heart rate. Rick got half of the questions wrong on a basic math worksheet, even though math is his strongest subject.</p>	<p><b>H.</b></p> <p>Sean has been practicing for the science section of the GED for months. As he works he keeps thinking, “I can’t do this,” and, “I’m going to fail this for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time.” Sean is shaking the entire time he tests.</p>
<p><b>I.</b></p> <p>Oscar woke up on the morning of the meeting with a pit in his stomach. The more he thought about it, the harder it was to breathe. Soon, he was hyperventilating. He called to cancel his meeting.</p>	<p><b>J.</b></p> <p>Elizabeth has been thinking about this test all day. She can’t seem to think about anything else. However, once she starts working on the test, she is able to focus on the questions. Her score even improved from last time!</p>
<p><b>K.</b></p> <p>Lulu’s teacher asks her to do the pretest in the math workbook, but when Lulu looks at the problems, she panics. Memories of hard middle school exams and failing grades fill her head. She sneaks a look at the back of the book and copies down as many answers as she can before the teacher sees her so she won’t get any questions wrong.</p>	<p><b>L.</b></p> <p>Marcos has to take the TABE test on the computer to assess his skills, but he doesn’t know how to use the mouse or how to skip answers he doesn’t know and go back to check them later. The timer is ticking away and he is afraid he’ll run out of time, so he gets up and goes to the bathroom in the middle of the test to calm his nerves.</p>

# BRAIN DUMP

*Before you take your test, spend about five minutes writing down everything that is going through your mind. It does not need to make sense to anyone but you. This is your chance to express any thoughts or feelings that you are having about your test, whether they are positive or negative. Writing these ideas out can help you clear your mind and calm you down before the test.*

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# PRACTICE YOUR BREATHING SKILLS

The following breathing exercises can help you calm down and slow down your thoughts when you start to feel anxious. The first breathing activity is one that can be done quickly **during your test** if you start to feel overwhelmed. The second exercise can be done **before your test or between sections** to prepare your body and brain for the test you are about to take.

## Quieting Response

<https://www.stress.org/take-a-deep-breath/>

*Quieting Response utilizes visualization and deep breathing (a powerful combination) to stop an acute stress response in its tracks. The entire exercise only takes 6 seconds!*

- First “smile inwardly” with your eyes and mouth and release the tension in your shoulders. This is a powerful muscle release in the places where most people hold their muscles tense.
- Then imagine holes in the soles of your feet. As you take a deep breath in, visualize hot air flowing through these holes moving slowly up your legs, through your abdomen and filling your lungs.
- Relax your muscles sequentially as the hot air moves through them up your body.
- When you exhale reverse the visualization so you “see” hot air coming out the same holes in your feet.
- Repeat throughout the day whenever you need to feel calm and relaxed.

## Breath Counting

<https://www.drweil.com/health-wellness/body-mind-spirit/stress-anxiety/breathing-three-exercises/>

*Try your hand at breath counting, a deceptively simple breathing technique.*

- Sit in a comfortable position with the spine straight and head inclined slightly forward. Gently close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Then let the breath come naturally without trying to influence it. Ideally it will be quiet and slow, but depth and rhythm may vary.
- To begin the exercise, count “one” to yourself as you exhale.
- The next time you exhale, count “two,” and so on up to “five.”
- Then begin a new cycle, counting “one” on the next exhalation.
- Never count higher than “five,” and count only when you exhale. You will know your attention has wandered when you find yourself up to “eight,” “ten,” “12,” even “19.”