Graduate Record Examination

“Understanding the new GRE”

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History of the GRE

• The GRE or the Graduated Record Examination is a standardized test for many graduate schools.
• It is a derivative of the SATs that were originally used during World War I as an IQ test.
• The Educational Testing Service (ETS) is the company that makes the GRE.
• ETS is a non-profit organization that makes more than 500 different tests.
Why is the GRE important?

• No serious scholar would suggest that the GRE predicts how well you will do in college; there is no study that shows a statistically valid correlation between the GRE and college grads.

• According to ETS: “Each year, about 675,000 prospective graduate and business school applicants from 230 countries/regions take the test. Applicants come from varying educational and cultural backgrounds and the GRE revised General Test provides the only common measure for comparing candidates' qualifications.”
Then what makes it important?

- A typical graduate school will receive at least 500 graduate applications. That’s:
  - 500 applications
  - 500 five-page essays
  - 1,500 letters of recommendation
  - + Any other requirement they may have
- The GRE scores are used as a filter so they can review only the applications that “merit” reviewing.
So why not use the GPA?

- There exists a perception, albeit difficult to prove, that some colleges have grade inflation.
- The standards or focus of one university is not necessarily the standard of another.
- The GRE allows colleges to process applications a little faster and keeps grade inflation in check and evens out the playing field.
What is new in the “New GRE”? 

- Adaptive Questions are now changed to Adaptive Sections. 
  - The difficulty of the section depends on your performance of the section before. This allows you to jump back and forth between questions in a section. 
- Longer test 
  - Old test: 2 hours 30 minutes 
  - New test: 3 hours 40 minutes
What is new in the “New GRE”? 

• You are allowed to use an on-screen calculator. 
• New question types
  ▫ Multiple choice questions with more than one answer. (You have to choose all the correct answers or you’ll get no credit)
  ▫ Select in passage questions.
  ▫ Others.
• Removed question types
  ▫ Analogies
  ▫ Antonyms
What is new in the “New GRE”?

- New scoring system
  - Old GRE: 200-800 scale/per area
  - New GRE: 130-170 scale/per area
Parts of the GRE

- One 30-minute Analysis of an Issue essay.
- One 30-minute Analysis of an Argument essay.
- Two 30-minutes Verbal Reasoning sections.
- Two 35-minutes Quantitative Reasoning sections.
Verbal Reasoning

Reading Comprehension
Reading Comprehension

• You’ll be presented with about eight passages, that will vary in length.
• Passages are selected from different disciplines and sources.
• Do not use your knowledge of the topic, but just use the information on hand.
• Think of it as an open book exam, the answer is “right in front of you”. 
Reading Comprehension

• Read the question twice. In order to find the correct answer you have to truly understand the question.
• It is perfectly natural for you to not comprehend the passage, ETS designs the test this way.
• You have to realize that you don’t receive points for understanding the text, you receive points for answering the questions.
• FOCUS ON THE QUESTIONS
How to approach a passage

• Attack the passage
  ▫ Main Idea
  ▫ Structure
  ▫ Tone
• Size up the question
• Find the answer
• Process of elimination
Types of Questions

- **Multiple choice – Select one answer**
- **Multiple choice – Select one or more answers**
  - These provide three answer choices and ask you to select all that are correct; one, two, or all three of the answer choices may be correct. To gain credit for these questions, you must select all the correct answers, and only those; there is no credit for partially correct answers.
- **Select in Passage**
  - The question asks you to click on the sentence in the passage that meets a certain description. To answer the question, you choose one of the sentences and click on it; clicking anywhere on a sentence will highlight it.
The passage suggests that Glass's work displays which of the following qualities?

A. A return to the use of popular music in classical compositions.

B. An attempt to elevate rock music to an artistic status more closely approximating that of classical music.

C. A long-standing tendency to incorporate elements from two apparently disparate musical styles.
Reviving the practice of using elements of popular music in classical composition, an approach that had been in hibernation in the United States during the 1960s, composer Philip Glass (born 1937) embraced the ethos of popular music without imitating it. Glass based two symphonies on music by rock musicians David Bowie and Brian Eno, but the symphonies' sound is distinctively his. Popular elements do not appear out of place in Glass's classical music, which from its early days has shared certain harmonies and rhythms with rock music. Yet this use of popular elements has not made Glass a composer of popular music. His music is not a version of popular music packaged to attract classical listeners; it is high art for listeners steeped in rock rather than the classics.

Select the sentence that distinguishes two ways of integrating rock and classical music.
Text Completion

- They are an advanced variation of the sentence completion section of the SATs.
- According to ETS: “Text Completion questions test this ability by omitting crucial words from short passages and asking the test taker to use the remaining information in the passage as a basis for selecting words or short phrases to fill the blanks and create a coherent, meaningful whole.”
How to approach it

- Don’t look at the answers. Read the question and think of a word that will fit (clue).
- See the options and connect with the ones that better fit your initial “clue”.
- Process of elimination.
- Multiple blanks
  - Don’t be intimidated by them, look for clues, if that doesn’t work, look for relations.
  - Use your scratch paper
Example

Vain and prone to violence, Caravaggio could not handle success: the more his (i)___________ as an artist increased, the more (ii)___________ his life became.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blank (i)</th>
<th>Blank (ii)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) temperance</td>
<td>(D) tumultuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) notoriety</td>
<td>(E) providential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) eminence</td>
<td>(F) dispassionate</td>
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</table>
Verbal Reasoning
Sentence Equivalence
How to approach it

- Read the instructions:
  - Select the *two* answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

- Forget the answers and read the question.
- Find a “clue” of what you think should be the right answer.
- Process of Elimination.
Example

• It was her view that the country's problems had been _______ by foreign technocrats, so that to ask for such assistance again would be counterproductive.
A. ameliorated
B. ascertained
C. diagnosed
D. exacerbated
E. overlooked
F. worsened
Quantitative Reasoning

“Remember the Basics”
Content Areas

• Arithmetic
  ▫ Properties and types of integers and other math concepts.

• Algebra
  ▫ Operations with exponents; factorization, solving equations, etc.

• Geometry

• Data Analysis
  ▫ Tables and charts.
Types of Questions

- Quantitative Comparison Questions
- Multiple choice questions (one answer)
- Multiple choice questions (one or more answers)
- Numeric entry questions
Quantitative Comparison Questions

• Instructions:
  ▫ Quantity A is greater.
  ▫ Quantity B is greater.
  ▫ The two quantities are equal.
  ▫ The relationship cannot be determined from the information given.
Examples

Quantity A

(2)(6)

Quantity B

2 + 6

A  B  C  D
Examples

Lionel is Younger than Maria

Twice Lionel’s Age

Maria’s Age

A B C D
More than one answer

Which of the following integers are multiples of both 2 and 3?

Indicate all such integers.

(A) 8
(B) 9
(C) 12
(D) 18
(E) 21
(F) 36
Numeric Entry Questions

One pen costs $0.25 and one marker costs $0.35. At those prices, what is the total cost of 18 pens and 100 markers?

$
Essay
Essays

- They are scored on a 1 to 6 scale.
- They consist of an issue essay and an argument essay.
- You have 30 minutes to complete each one of them.
- Create a template in your mind that will help you structure your ideas.
Is the written part important?

- It depends on what you are studying
- It depends on the university
- Your best option is to call the university to see what its expectation is.
The Issue Essay

• In this essay you are required to present your opinion on the provided topic.
• Steps you should consider:
  ▫ Think
  ▫ Organize
  ▫ Write
Examples

• “Genius is nothing more than another term for obsession”
• “The proper role of education is to teach facts, not morals”
• “True beauty is found not in the exceptional but in the commonplace”
The Argument Essay

• They ask you to critique the logic of an argument.
• Steps you should take:
  ▫ Identify the premise and the conclusion
  ▫ Identify assumptions
  ▫ Use the assumptions that better fit your writing style.
  ▫ Write your essay
  ▫ Review it
Example

• Woven baskets characterized by a particular distinctive pattern have previously been found only in the immediate vicinity of the prehistoric village of Palea and therefore were believed to have been made only by the Palean people. Recently, however, archaeologists discovered such a "Palean" basket in Lithos, an ancient village across the Brim River from Palea. The Brim River is very deep and broad, and so the ancient Paleans could have crossed it only by boat, and no Palean boats have been found. Thus it follows that the so-called Palean baskets were not uniquely Palean.

Write a response in which you discuss what specific evidence is needed to evaluate the argument and explain how the evidence would weaken or strengthen the argument.
## College Professor vs. GRE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>College Professor</th>
<th>GRE</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Numbers in Math problems.</td>
<td>• Words in math problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Only relevant information</td>
<td>• A lot of information that will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Checks your work (process)</td>
<td>confuse you.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Full credit for correct answers;</td>
<td>• Doesn’t matter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>partial credit for the process.</td>
<td>• You’re either right or wrong.</td>
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Things to remember

- ETS works just as hard making up wrong answers as it does making correct answers.
- Answer every question, making educated guesses if you have to. Just try to eliminate one or more choices before guessing.
- Pace yourself.
- Don't second-guess yourself.
- Practice, practice, practice!
- Don’t Panic!!!
Future References