



SECTION 3

SAMPLE CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENTS

This section of the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators® (GACE™) Preparation Guide is designed to assist you in responding to the constructed-response assignments on the test. Included in this section are:

- ▶ Constructed-response assignment directions
- ▶ Sample constructed-response assignments
- ▶ Assignment response sheets
- ▶ An example of a strong response to each sample assignment
- ▶ Scoring criteria that will be used in evaluating your response to each assignment

For each sample assignment, you may want to take the following steps to prepare for the test:

- Review the constructed-response assignment directions.
- Print the assignment and the assignment response sheet.
- Use scrap paper to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response.
- Use the assignment response sheet to record your response. The assignment response sheet reflects the amount of space available on an actual test.
- After you complete the assignment, review the sample strong response, your response, and the scoring criteria.

CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT DIRECTIONS

A sample of the directions for the constructed-response assignments is shown in the box below.

CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT DIRECTIONS

For each constructed-response assignment in this section, you are to prepare a written response of up to one page and record it in the area provided on the appropriate Assignment Response Sheet in your answer document.

Read each assignment carefully before you begin to write. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write. You may use any blank space provided in this test booklet following each assignment to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. *However, each of your final responses must be written on the appropriate Assignment Response Sheet in your answer document.*

Your responses will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Purpose:** The extent to which the response fulfills the purpose of the assignment in relation to relevant GACE framework objectives
- **Application of Content Knowledge and Skills:** The extent to which the response accurately and effectively applies content knowledge and skills in relation to relevant GACE framework objectives
- **Supporting Evidence:** The extent to which the response includes appropriate, specific supporting evidence of content knowledge and skills in relation to relevant GACE framework objectives

Evaluation of each response will be based on the criteria above, not on your writing ability. However, your response must be communicated clearly enough to permit a valid judgment of your knowledge and skills. Your responses should be written for an audience of educators in the field.

Your responses should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review your work and make any changes you think will improve your responses.

The selected-response section of the answer document containing your name will be removed from your written responses to maintain your anonymity during the scoring process. Do not write your name on any other portion of the answer document, and do not separate any of the sheets from the document.

Please turn the page and begin the constructed-response assignment section of the test.

CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT ONE

■ Sample Constructed-Response Assignment One

Read the excerpt below from *Maud Martha*, a novel by Gwendolyn Brooks; then complete the assignment that follows.

There. She had it at last. The weeks it had devoted to eluding her, the tricks, the clever hide-and-go-seeks, the routes it had in all sobriety devised, together with the delicious moments it had, undoubtedly, laughed up its sleeve—all to no ultimate avail. She had that mouse.

It shook its little self, as best it could, in the trap. Its bright black eyes contained no appeal—the little creature seemed to understand that there was no hope of mercy from the eternal enemy, no hope of reprieve or postponement—but a fine small dignity. It waited. It looked at Maud Martha.

She wondered what else it was thinking. Perhaps that there was not enough food in its larder. Perhaps that little Betty, a puny child from the start, would not, now, be getting fed. Perhaps that, now, the family's seasonal house-cleaning, for lack of expert direction, would be left undone. It might be regretting that young Bobby's education was now at an end. It might be nursing personal regrets. No more the mysterious shadows of the kitchenette, the uncharted twists, the unguessed halls. No more the sweet delights of the chase, the charms of being unsuccessfully hounded, thrown at.

Maud Martha could not bear the little look.

"Go home to your children," she urged. "To your wife or husband." She opened the trap. The mouse vanished.

Suddenly, she was conscious of a new cleanness in her. A wide air walked in her. A life had blundered its way into her power and it had been hers to preserve or destroy. She had not destroyed. In the center of that simple restraint was—creation. She had created a piece of life. It was wonderful.

"Why," she thought, as her height doubled, "why, I'm good! I am *good*."

She ironed her aprons. Her back was straight. Her eyes were mild, and soft with a godlike loving-kindness.

- Identify one emotion that the character Maud Martha is experiencing in this excerpt; and
- describe two strategies the author uses to convey the emotion that you identified, citing specific examples from the excerpt.

■ Strong Response to Sample Constructed-Response Assignment One

In this excerpt, Maud Martha's imagination is the main source of her emotions, prompting her to feel great empathy for the mouse that she captures.

The first strategy that the author uses to convey Maud Martha's empathy for the mouse is to put Maud Martha, and the reader, in the shoes, so to speak, of the mouse; that is, the narrative shifts in point of view from Maud Martha to the mouse. In the second paragraph, the mouse is described as having "no hope of mercy from the eternal enemy." The eternal enemy, here, is Maud Martha, and the reader's perspective is shifted to that of the mouse, who looks at Maud Martha as an adversary. Instead of Maud Martha acting on the mouse ("She had that mouse"), the mouse acts on her ("It looked at Maud Martha"). The two seem to reflect each other. They are locked together; they identify with each other. Of course, this identification with the mouse is only imagined by Maud Martha, but the feeling of empathy is real.

Another strategy that the author uses to convey Maud Martha's empathy is personification. In the first paragraph, the mouse "laughed up its sleeve." And in the third paragraph, Maud Martha's active imagination depicts the mouse with a family, a house to clean, and even "personal regrets." The mouse's "children" are given names and attributes, and their fates even become clear: "little Betty" is "a puny child," and "Bobby's education" will soon be "at an end."

CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT TWO

■ Sample Constructed-Response Assignment Two

Use the information below to complete the assignment that follows.

A middle grades language arts teacher has asked students to produce a piece of narrative writing emphasizing effective characterization. A student submits the following paragraphs for the teacher's review.

Marlene is my best friend outside of school. She lives down the street. She has five brothers and no sisters. She is the second oldest child in her family. She has to do a lot more housework than I do, even though she is just twelve years old. For example, she has to wash and fold a load of laundry every day. She is not allowed to play until the clothes are done, so I often go help her. The way she does the laundry reminds me of my mother. After her chores are done, though, she has free time.

"Let's go get a snack," she will usually say. This means that she wants to come to my house. She likes my house. My mother only makes me do chores on Saturday. When Marlene and I are at my house, we play with makeup, watch movies, eat chips and pickles, and laugh a lot.

- Identify one area of strength in the student's characterization, and explain how this strength contributes to the purpose of the paragraphs; and
- identify one area of weakness in the student's characterization, and explain how the student could remedy this weakness to better achieve the purpose of the paragraphs.

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■ Strong Response to Sample Constructed-Response Assignment Two

One area of strength in the student's characterization of Marlene is the contrast established between Marlene's life at her own home and Marlene's experiences at the student-narrator's home. The first paragraph specifies that, although she is only twelve years old, Marlene has daily chores to do at home. The example given, "she has to wash and fold a load of laundry every day," is specific and strong, and the phrases "has to do" and "is not allowed" reinforce the idea that Marlene's activities at home are somewhat restricted and confined to work. However, at the narrator's home, she is characterized as more relaxed and free-spirited. Here, the two "play with makeup, watch movies, eat chips and pickles, and laugh a lot." This contrast contributes to the narrative purpose (characterization) by showing two distinct sides of the character: she can be responsible like an adult, and she can be playful like a child.

One area of weakness lies in the vague but evocative sentence, "The way she does laundry reminds me of my mother." Only the student-narrator knows what this means. The idea introduced in this sentence could be further developed by describing more precisely how Marlene's way of doing laundry is similar to the way the narrator's mother does laundry. These additional details would reinforce the characterization of Marlene as a young person who possesses some of the qualities of an adult, such as maturity and a sense of responsibility.

■ Acknowledgments

Assignment Number	Copyright Information
1	Brooks, Gwendolyn. <i>Maud Martha</i> as appears in <i>Prentice Hall Literature Platinum</i> . Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989. pp. 119–120. Reprinted by consent of Brooks Permissions.

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CRITERIA FOR SCORING YOUR RESPONSE

Each response will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

PURPOSE	The extent to which the response fulfills the purpose of the assignment in relation to relevant GACE framework objectives
APPLICATION OF CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS	The extent to which the response accurately and effectively applies content knowledge and skills in relation to relevant GACE framework objectives
SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	The extent to which the response includes appropriate, specific supporting evidence of content knowledge and skills in relation to relevant GACE framework objectives

Each response is rated on a three-point scale. The three score points of the score scale correspond to varying degrees of performance that are related to the above criteria.

Score	Description
3	The "3" response reflects thorough understanding of relevant content knowledge and skills as defined in relevant GACE framework objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response fully achieves the purpose of the assignment.• The response demonstrates an accurate and effective application of relevant content knowledge and skills.• The response provides appropriate, specific supporting evidence of relevant content knowledge and skills.
2	The "2" response reflects general understanding of relevant content knowledge and skills as defined in relevant GACE framework objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response largely achieves the purpose of the assignment.• The response demonstrates a generally accurate, generally effective application of relevant content knowledge and skills.• The response provides some appropriate and general supporting evidence of relevant content knowledge and skills.
1	The "1" response reflects limited or no understanding of relevant content knowledge and skills as defined in relevant GACE framework objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response partially achieves or fails to achieve the purpose of the assignment.• The response demonstrates limited, inaccurate, and/or ineffective application of relevant content knowledge and skills.• The response provides limited or no appropriate, specific supporting evidence of relevant content knowledge and skills.

Please note: A response that is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, not primarily in the target language, or lacking a sufficient amount of original work to score will be considered **unscorable**. If there is no response to the assignment, then the response will be considered **blank**.