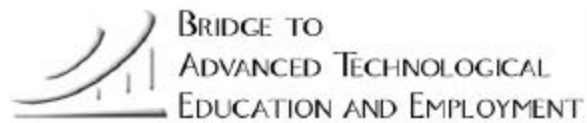


Accelerated Computer-based GED



Instructor's Guide



ACCELERATED GED

A Computer-Based Preparation Program for The General Educational Development Tests

Instructor Guide
By the Wayne State University Team
March 2000

Bridge to Advanced Technological Education and Employment Project

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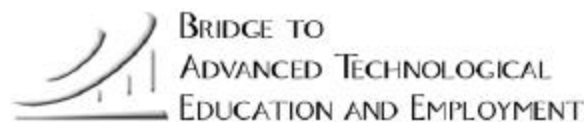


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I. Overview

A. About General Educational Development (GED) Tests

1. What is GED?

The initials GED stand for General Educational Development. The GED Test is referred to as the High School Equivalency Test. About 20% of current American population who don't have a high school diploma. The GED Test measures one's ability against that of graduating high-school students and gives a chance for those who don't finish high-school education a chance to earn a certificate that is the equivalent of a high-school diploma. There are five tests in the following subject areas: Social Studies, Science, Literature and Arts, Math and Writing. The primary goal of the GED Preparation Program is designed to help the individuals to pass the GED Test and obtain the certificate.

2. Why Take GED?

Every state in the United States and many Canadian Provinces use GED Test. The results serve as the equivalency of the high-school diploma for the purposes of employment, promotion, and licensing. The current trend is that most of the self-sustaining jobs in the market require a GED certificate or high-school diploma for employment. And often the certificate is considered an important factor for promotion within a job.

Moreover, some colleges and universities now accept satisfactory GED test scores in place of completed high-school grade transcripts for admission purposes. A prospective college applicant now can present the GED scores for applying for a college in place of a high-school transcript.

B. Course Description

This program is designed to meet the needs of the individuals who want to pass the GED Test. Computer-based Training (CBT) will be utilized as the primary mode of instruction, integrating five commercially-available computer software packages. The participants will be pre-assessed for entry levels and then assigned to different groups according to the results. The participants will receive instruction and practice on all the five subjective areas in the GED Test, and in addition, will be trained in test taking skills.

C. Course Objectives

This course is intended to help the participants:

- Pass all the five tests on the GED Test
- Be trained on the test taking skills
- Improve comprehension skills and math knowledge level to pass the GED Test
- Develop positive and consistent learning habits
- Receive a certificate upon completion of the program
- Learn to practice basic operations of a computer and computer software

D. Targeted Population

This program is targeted to individuals who desire to pass the GED Test in order to find an employment opportunity or fulfill an employer's requirement. Most of the population who registered in the program are educationally disadvantaged. They didn't finish their high school education and most are out of school for a long time. These individuals come to the program with normally strong motivations, such as a (better) job, for example. However, the program has to meet a number of the challenges from the population, such as flexibility and special needs of adults in education. For more discussion on the challenges and situations that the participants are in, please see section *I-F: Rationale for the Curriculum Approach* and *Appendix A: Adult Learners and Adult Education*. The program is also challenged by the variety of the needs expressed from the population. People enter the program with a range of educational and social backgrounds, and therefore require more flexible curriculum and instructional approach to meet their educational needs..

E. Learner Prerequisites

The participants in this course should at least finish elementary school and have had some high school education, because this class is not designed for non-readers and non-writers. The participants' actual reading and math level might be lower than their education grade, and the instructor is to determine this level through the pre-test and place them into appropriate software package.

Enthusiasm and commitment definitely play very important roles for participant success. Because this is a self-paced course and the participant works on a computer alone, the participant must be able to commit consistent visits to the lab and discipline him/herself to continue in the program, otherwise they won't be able to succeed in their objectives to pass the GED Test.

F. Rationale for Curriculum Approach

This course is primarily a computer-based course. Due to the characteristics of the target population described above, the program is designed to meet the variety of the needs from the population based on the following rationale:

- People who come with various educational entry levels will receive a customized study plan from the program to meet their needs. They work on the areas/content that they need to improve, strengthening their knowledge and comprehension to reach the level necessary to pass the GED Test. This individualized feature cannot be achieved via traditional classroom settings, where everyone receives the same content during the class.
- The self-pacing feature of the CBT program will meet the flexibility scheduling needs of the participants. Often people enrolled in a GED preparation course find it hard to keep a fixed schedule to come to the class. They may have a changing working schedule and/or family responsibilities that will hinder them from coming to a class at a fixed schedule. In this program, they can come to the lab and work at their own pace, and meanwhile get the instruction and practice needed.
- The interactivity of the CBT will give learners more control over their work and progress and therefore should result in greater personal confidence in themselves. The approach differentiates from the traditional classroom setting so that the privacy can be maintained to reduce the potential embarrassment of the learners.
- We choose a CBT approach because of the trend in the workplace and academic areas toward more usage of technology. Participants will receive and reinforce their computer literacy during this program, which will raise their technology awareness and their employability.

G. Research on CBT used in Adult Education Programs

This section provides a very brief summary of the benefits of CBT usage in Adult Education Program, based on the research and studies done on the topic. When test-preparation was involved, test scores had to be a major factor to measure the effectiveness of a method. When not considering test scores as the only measurement, according to the derived findings from research, some of the benefits could be summarized as:

- Reduced attrition. From a comparison study done in 1995 between the traditional classroom program and a CBT program, results showed that dropout rates tended to be reduced in the CBT groups, as opposed to the group that used the traditional lecture-based method (Rachal, 1995). Since attrition was a universal problem, this perception or

finding , which rates tended to favor the CBT group could be as exciting. Part of the impact attributed to the novelty to the computer and technology, which played like a "drawing card" to attract and retain attention. Most of Adult Education Program learners did not possess sufficient computer skills prior to the CBT program, and therefore had to go through some basic technology training. According to a final project found, learners reacted CBT to be more engaging and adding interest to repetitive tasks (Central Intermediate Unit 10,1995).

- Self-confidence. Almost all the CBT participants reported an improved self-confidence and sense of mastery of the technology and the materials, according to the Central Intermediate Unit 10 report. Activities in the CBT were designed differently from the traditional classroom activities. They encourage adult students to think critically and develop problem-solving skills, while at the same time enabling them to improve reading, writing and math skills using technologies that were increasingly in demand in the workplace and in society in general. Students' motivation and attention were increased for students participating in these activities. Learners' confidence and empowerment could also be positively affected (Central Intermediate Unit 10,1995).
- Technology awareness. As mentioned previously, most of the Adult Education Program learners were first exposed to the computer in their first CBT experience. They received certain amount of training and experience in the new technology (computer) from the CBT applications. The sense of mastery of the technology overcame the afraid-ness, and they believed that familiarity with computers will make them more employable (Central Intermediate Unit 10,1995).
- Privacy, feedback and faster learning. The Central Intermediate Unit 10 research also showed that it was cited that privacy was one of the virtues of CBT, allowing students to make errors free of embarrassment since the machine was entirely non-judgmental (Central Intermediate Unit 10,1995). Also pointed out by a study done in 1998 on the CBT usage in remedial education, most of the Adult Education Program learners had had failing experience with public schools, and research showed that they were more fragile and easier to give up when they came to a remedial program. The privacy allowed the learner to be able to avoid public embarrassment that they could encounter if they went to a traditional Adult Education classroom (Keup, 1998). Rachal's (1995) research also indicated that by working at one's own pace and learner control over the application, the learner felt more independent in learning, and the individualization resulted in more motivation and faster learning (Rachal, 1995).
- Availability. The learner can have the control of the time according to his or her own schedule. Both the above mentioned programs reported that adult learners who came to

the remedial programs were often time-restrained, and the flexibility of scheduling of the CBT program provided many adults the opportunity actually to finish the program, while in a lot of traditional programs, a good portion of learners would have to drop out the program due to family or work scheduling conflicts.

II. Planning

A. Instructor's Role and Responsibilities

There are two parts of the instructor's role and responsibilities in this program. First, it is not realistic to say that since self-paced CBT software is utilized, the participants could succeed without an instructor present. Experience has proven that an instructor should be present to make sure the approach will achieve the desired results. Concomitantly, the instructor's role in this program is different from that in a traditional classroom setting. The instructor is more geared to be a facilitator, an advisor and a mentor instead of primarily being a lecturer. The instructor's responsibilities can be summarized in the following four main tasks:

Assessment -- This vital part of the instructor's role should be handled with great sensitivity. Many adults have not been in a classroom setting for a long time. For some, the testing situation and facing the results of tests is an extremely stressful experience that can cause them to drop out of the class. Diffusing the anxiety of the testing situation is a necessary part of that role. There are various parts for the assessment role of the instructor.

- 1). The initial meeting with the participant, including a brief interview, the Reading Progress Scale test, and the Pre-test on the *Contemporary Official GED Practice Tests*. Please refer to Part III: "Program Scheduling and Management"- Section B: "Orientation" and Section C: "Pre-test and Placement" for more implementation details.
- 2). Progress checking: For each group (please refer to Part III: "Program Scheduling and Management" - Section C: "Pre-test and Placement" for placement implementation details), the instructor should assess the participant's progress on the *Contemporary Official GED Practice Tests*. Please refer to Part III: "Program Scheduling and Management" - Section D: "Organizing the Course and Progress Tracking" - 4: "Progress Tracking" for details.
- 3). Final Assessment: after each group goes through their time period according to their study plans, the instructor is to assess each participant at the end of their individual study plan, using a new set of tests on the *Official GED Practice Tests*. Please refer to Part III: "Program Scheduling and Management" - Section D: "Organizing the Course and Progress Tracking" - 5: "Final Assessment" for details.

Keeping Records -- It is as important for the instructor as well as the other part of program management to be aware of the participant's records. These records will be good for the instructor to adjust the individual study plans to their needs, and also provide materials for report and research. Each participant should have a file of their own, with a disk pocket, a disk with his/her name and any program user name /password if applicable. All of the individual records, including the anecdotal comments and observations should be kept in their file. And the instructor may choose to have a file folder to hold a copy of the master schedule and

There are various types of records that the instructor needs to keep on each participant:

- 1). Attendance Records: Each participant needs to sign in and out for each lab visit on the sign-in sheet (Please see the Appendix for the sign-in sheet). This helps keep track of their total working time and frequency of their lab.
- 2). Academic Records: The instructor is to regularly examine each participant's computer-generated records in each of the program package they work/test on, and manually keep a master record for the whole class as well as for each individual. This is very detailed work, especially when there are quite a few participants at the same period of time. This could be done the best on an Microsoft Excel program since it will be able to calculate the time.
- 3). Other records -- Anecdotal comments and observations, especial in regard to learning or change, should be documented. Companies and unions are very interested in this kind of feedback and may want to use quotes for recruitment or promotional activities. Again, this kind of records will be good for research in terms of human factors in such a program.

Instruction - In spite that most of the instruction and practice occurs on the computer at their own pace, in some cases and areas the instructor still need to perform instruction to the participant, either on an individual basis or to a group, which ever is needed at the time the need occurs.

- 1). Individual Tutoring - This happens many times for the area such as reading and math. Since the instructor is present at the lab time, she/he will be able to observe the work of the participants from "looking over the shoulder". When a need for help on a reading project, such as a long sentence or a word, is noticed, the instructor should ask the participant if she/he needs a hint. If the answer is positive, the instructor can help them on how to deal with words they don't understand and how to gain meaning from the context. In math problems, often the instructor will need to assist participants in analyze a problem and applying appropriate formula to solve the problem.

- 2). **Group Instruction/Activity** - At times when the instructor observes that in the lab a certain group of participants are working on the same area or topic, and a majority of them need assistance, the instructor can organize a small group instruction or activity at the other side of the room where other participants won't be interrupted. Such areas and topics will typically be scanning for information in reading, math and writing exercises. Because writing an essay is part of the GED's writing test and is an area the participants especially need a live instructor for correcting, suggesting, and evaluating. Writing activities can be given to the participants and the instructor should go through their work and give comments for improvement.

Keeping on Task - Encouragement and monitoring are two major jobs in this category.

- 1). **Encouraging** - Participants can feel frustrated and want to give up when they score low on a pre-test or during the practice. The instructor always needs to encourage them to move on and ensure them that they can do better if they keep working on it. It is especially necessary because the participant has relatively low interaction with the instructor as in a traditional classroom where the instructor can constantly give positive feedback. A prompt "pat on the shoulder" will help remediate.
- 2). **Monitoring** - Participant may have difficulty sitting down and keeping on task for two to three hours in our cases. The instructor has to encourage the participants to go back to work if they get restless after a while of work. Sometimes if they feel bored or tired of working, the instructor can try to switch the participant to work on another program or subject.

Technical Support - The instructor is expected to install and manage all the software packages used in this program. The instructor is also the person the participants turn to when there is a technical question or problem. Therefore, the instructor should possess certain technical background such as windows troubleshooting. For serious program running problems, the instructor should contact the technical support of the software publisher and/or report to the Workplace Education and Training Program.

B. Lab and Equipment Requirements

Each lab should have enough working computers to accommodate regular lab session participants. In order to have the programs function well, each of the individual computer should meet the following minimum system requirements (Please also refer to the software specifications matrix for requirements of individual program):

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- ✓ 486/66 MHZ processor
- ✓ 15 MB RAM
- ✓ 14" 256-color monitor
- ✓ 2x or better CD-ROM
- ✓ Enough free hard drive space for all the software installation, if the computers are not networked
- ✓ Floppy Drive
- ✓ Sound & video card and headphones for the computers with *Learning 2000* installed

Also, in order to make the participants' and instructor's work easier, it is ideal to have the lab computers networked, so that the software can be installed on the server. This will have the following benefits: 1) It will save the save the hard drive space on the client computers which the participants work on, so that the computers can perform at a faster speed; 2) The participants can come to the lab and work on any computer that is available, instead of having to stay on one computer; 3) The instructor can register the participants from the server or on a single workstation. Also the instructor can access all the participants' records through the server or one computer, instead of having to go through each workstation for the records.

If the lab is not networked, the instructor will have to install all the software on each individual computer, as well as access the record information from individual machine.

C. Courseware Introduction

Five commercially developed software package will be used in this program. They are:

- ✓ Contemporary's *Official GED Practice Tests*
- ✓ Contemporary's *Pre-GED Interactive*
- ✓ Glencoe's *GED for the PC*
- ✓ Learning 2000 Inc.'s *Learning 2000*
- ✓ Davidson & Associates' *Ultimate Speed Reader*

The specifications of the five software packages are described in the table in Section III-C-3: *Courseware Specification*.

D. Lab Hours

The instructor needs to schedule at least two full days a week in the lab. The suggested time is 10 am to 6pm, or noon to 8 pm, to meet the particular participants' time slot needs.

The instructor will be available to all the participants who come to the lab during his/her scheduled working time. He/she will be able to help participants register, log on, solve technical problems, to provide academic assistance including individual tutoring and group activities. The lab will also have other open times, where the instructor might not be available, where the

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participants can work on their own. A lab schedule will be provided to all the participants so that they can come whenever they can. The instructor should train the participant on how to turn on/off computer, open the program(s), how to log on and access the program. Prospective adults who are interested in the program but drop in the lab when the instructor is not available will be given a time when the instructor is available and advised to come back to register with the instructor.

III. Program Scheduling and Management

A flowchart is developed to represent the structure of the Accelerated GED program. It is attached on the next page.

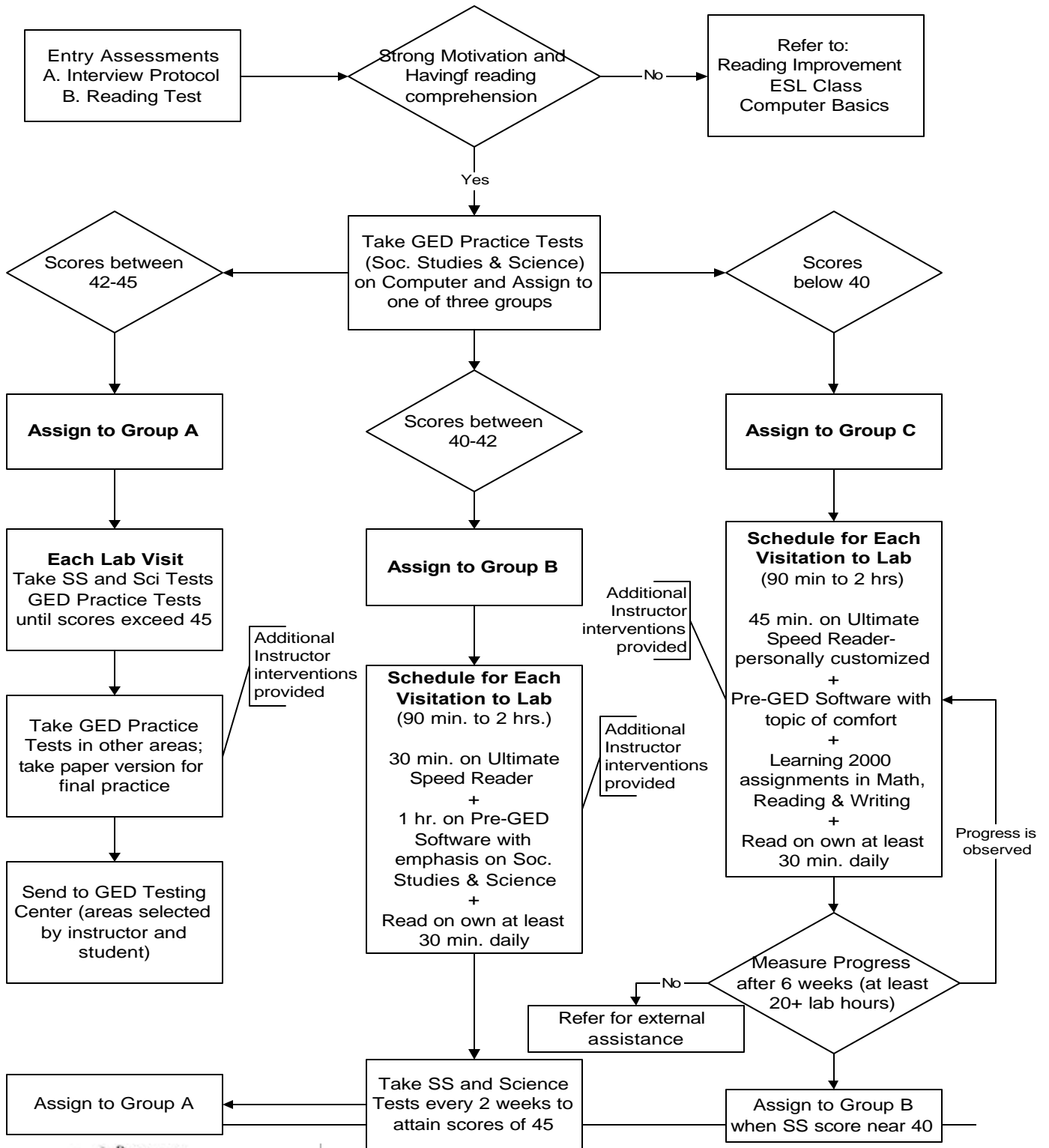
A. Introduction

The instructor needs to conduct an introduction to the participant upon their completion of the registration process (filling in the entry forms, etc.).

<u>What the Instructor will explain</u>	<u>What the participant will get</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The title of the course • The expense of the course (free to EZ residents) • The objectives of the course • The delivery method of the course • The pre-test and posttest process • The time frame of the course • The lab time with instructor • The open lab time without instructor • The expectations to the participants • Other assistance available if the participant goes through the course (e.g. arranging to take the tests, referral letters, etc.) 	<p>A foldout with important information about the course, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title of the course • The location and phone number of the lab they attend • The instructor's name, office phone number, and e-mail address (if applicable) • The lab time with/without an instructor • WordArt in big print: Consistency Commitment Concentration Enthusiasm

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**Accelerated GED Preparation Program
Preliminary DRAFT: 2/2/00**



B. Orientation

1. Interviewing Protocol and Reading Test

An initial meeting with the participant is given on an individual basis. The instructor should briefly interview each participant on his or her first visit, using the Interview Protocol. The interview will give the instructor an initial impression of the participant's background, education, and motivation degree. The interview will be followed by a reading skill test, the Reading Progress Scale. The test gives a brief check of the participant's reading ability, knowing the score will help the instructor understand the comprehension skill of the participant. If the participant has strong motivation and basic reading skills (like at least 3rd to 4th grade level, **or we need to use a grading scale from the Reading test itself**) the participant can proceed with the next phase in the program - computer skills training/familiarization and pre-tests). Otherwise, the participant will be referred to other programs, such as Reading Improvement, ESL (if their English level is too limited for this program), or computer basics if they want to gear to that direction.

2. Computer Skills Training/Familiarization

This process can take place the same time with the pre-test. That is, the participant will be trained on the basic computer skills while learning how to log on the computer to take the pre-tests. The instructor needs to have a user name and password for each participant in order to have them do the activity in the right column in the following table

<u>The participant will learn:</u>	<u>Under the demonstration and instruction of the instructor, the participant will do :</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to turn on and off a computer • How to start a windows operation system • How to open a program • How to log on a program • How to use the keyboard and mouse • How to scroll up and down in a window • How to close a program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn on a computer properly • Using keyboard and mouse, Typing in a password to log on the windows/network is necessary • Go to task bar and start the <i>Official GED Practice Tests</i> • Using the keyboard and mouse, log on with the user name and the password given by the instructor • Using mouse to click through to get the pre-tests and the sections they will take

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling the first one or two questions to see the scrolling and interactivity functions of the program • Exit the program • Insert and pull out a disk to/from the floppy drive • Turn off the computer (if necessary)
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C. Pre-tests and Placement

1. Using the Pre-tests

Contemporary's *Official Practice Tests* has four sets of similar tests, each covering the different subject areas: math, science, social studies, literature, and writing. The social studies and/or the science portion of Form CC was used for the pre-test, because this is easier for the participant while being a good indicator of the participant's level of comprehension. (If a participant has had good grades in school before they left, the instructor can give the participant his/her preference for the subject area of the test to take first.) The literature portion, with different genres, is more difficult to interpret and comprehend. The science portion was given first and if the participant did well enough and had a positive attitude with the testing experience, he/she can also be given the social studies portion. The instructor should encourage them to take both the social studies and science, because the participant may not do as well on the first and might do better on the other, giving the participant more confidence.

2. Placement in the three groups

Contemporary's *Official Practice Tests* has four sets of similar tests, each covering the different subject areas: math, science, social studies, literature, and writing. The social studies and/or the science portion of Form CC was used for the pre-test, because this is easier for the participant while being a good indicator of the participant's level of comprehension. (If a participant has had good grades in school before they left, the instructor can give the participant his/her preference for the subject area of the test to take first.) The literature portion, with different genres, is more difficult to interpret and comprehend. The science portion was given first and if the participant did well enough and had a positive attitude with the testing experience, he/she can also be given the social studies portion. The instructor should encourage them to take both the social studies and science, because the participant may not do as well on the first and might do better on the other, giving the participant more confidence.

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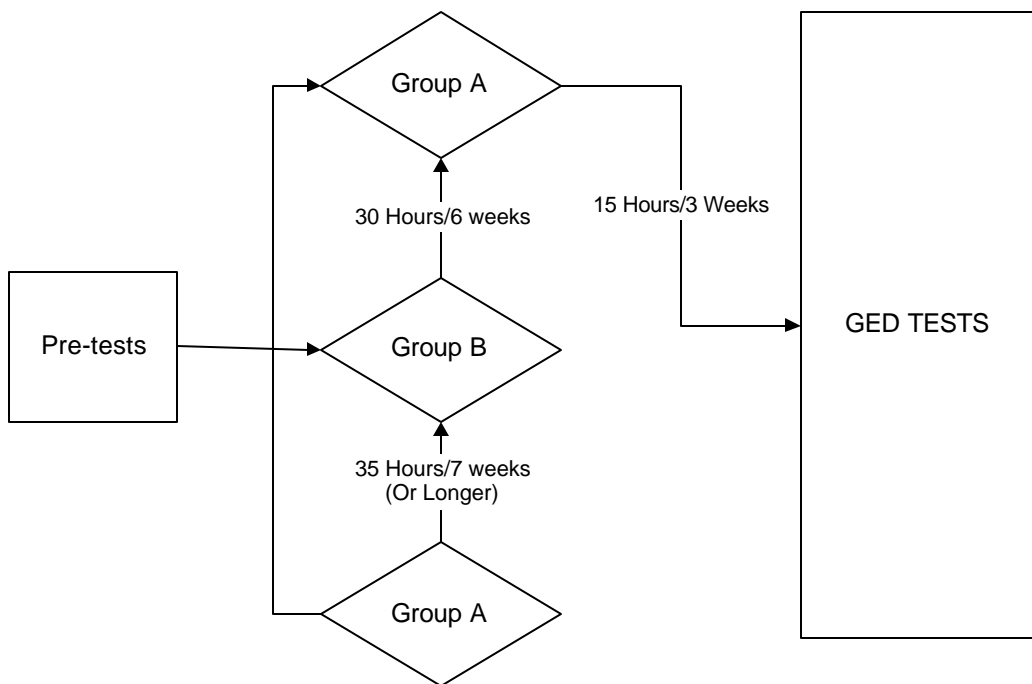
3. Courseware Specifications

Title	Publisher	Cost			Order / Contact	Target Group in this program
		Single user station	Network version	Site License		
Pre-GED Interactive	Contemporary	\$ 995.00	\$ 2985.00	\$ 2985.00	Phone: 1-800-621-1918 (ext.411 for support) Fax: 1-800- 998-3103 (order); (847) 679-1549 (support) E-mail: ntcpub@tribune.com (order) Dferguson@tribune.com (Support) Website: http://www.contempoarybooks.com	B, C
Official GED Practice Tests	Contemporary	\$ 195.00	\$ 585.00	\$ 585.00	Phone: 1-800-621-1918 (ext.411 for support) Fax: 1-800- 998-3103 (order) (847) 679-1549 (support) E-mail: ntcpub@tribune.com (order) Dferguson@tribune.com (Support) Website: http://www.contempoarybooks.com	A, B,C
Learning 2000	Learning 2000, Inc.	\$ 649.95 \$2500.00 for management records	N/A	N/A	Technical Support: 1-800-568-1751 Customer Services: 1-888- You Learn (968-5327)	C
GED for the PC	Glencoe		\$2,600: 10-15- workstation		Support/Assistance:1-800- 437-3715 Ordering:1-800-334-7344	A,B,C
Ultimate Speed Reader	Davidson & Associates, Inc.	\$69.95			Technical Support: Phone: 1-800-556-6141 or (310) 793-0600 Fax: (310) 214-7937 E-mail: Support@education.com Website: http://www.education.com Sales/Customer Service: 1-800-545-7677 / E-mail: sales@education.com	A,B,C

D. Organizing the Course and Progress Tracking

1. Time frame for each group

The original schedule for the participants is to come to the lab twice a week, 2 to 2.5 hours a time. Since the participants don't come at regular times during the week, but rather at their own convenient schedule while the lab is open, the time frame for each of the groups is also scheduled according to the working hours instead of the weeks. Each group of participants is designed to have different time frame. Also please note that the time frame listed below is an approximate time, and the actual time each individual needs for each stage may vary.



2. Instructional Start-up Procedure

After the instructor determines the group the participant belongs to, the instructor will do the following to make sure that records be kept and progress be tracked from the very beginning.

- 1). Prepare a folder for each of the participants in Group B and Group C. The folder should have sticky disk pocket in the front, with the name, user name, and password that the

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instructor set up from the pre-test. Because the Pre-GED Interactive and the Official GED Practice Tests follow the same user name-password convention, the participant can use the same combination for the *Pre-GED Interactive*. The Group A do not need to work on the *Pre-GED Interactive* therefore no disk either, but they need to keep the same user name to keep practicing on the *Official GED Practice Tests*. So an alternative is to attach card in their disk pocket, with their user name and password. The folders will be kept in the lab and the participants should know where to locate their own folders if they come to work when the instructor is not available.

- 2). Copy the Sign-in sheets and Tracking Forms. Put the individual sign-in sheets in the participant's folder. Build another folder for the instructor's self. Inserting the tracking form in the instructor folder. The instructor folder should not be accessible to the participants.
- 3). Instruct the participant to sign in and out every time they come to work in the lab.
- 4). Remind the participant (Group B and Group C) to insert their disk to the floppy drive and take it out after done, for *Pre-GED Interactive* only.
- 5). Direct the participant (Group C) to learn to start, log on, navigate and close the *Learning 2000*. There is only user name to choose from the opening screen.
- 6). Work with the participant to come up with a tentative weekly schedule to come. Make it two days a week and 2.5 hours a day when the instructor is available first. Write it down on a card for the participant, and keep a record in the instructor folder. But assure the participant that if the time slot doesn't work out, he/she can always come any time the lab is open to work at own, though the time when the instructor is in is preferable so that assistance is available.
- 7). The test taking skills training and confidence building should be constantly built into the regular lab visits. The instructor is to look over the participant's shoulder, provide test-taking tips, guessing techniques, and encouraging promptly. This works better instead of pouring the information at the end of the course. (Please refer to Section vi: Preparing for the Tests for more information)

3. Lab Visit Session Schedule

Following is a suggested tentative schedule for each group assigned. However, please remember that individualization in content and flexibility in time is the greatest feature for this program. Therefore, the instructor is subject to make any adjustment to the schedule according to individual needs. And the customized plan should come with the consent from the participant him/herself.

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a) Group A

Week /Hours	Program
Week 1 (or 1st 5 hours)	<i>Official GED Practice Tests - Form DD</i> + <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> if Desired + <i>GED for the PC</i> if needed
Week 2 (or 2nd 5 hours)	<i>Official GED Practice Tests - Form EE</i> + <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> if Desired + <i>GED for the PC</i> if needed
Week 3 (or 3rd 5 hours)	<i>Official GED Practice Tests - Form FF</i> + <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> if Desired + <i>GED for the PC</i> if needed

b) Group B

Week /Hours	Program	Notes:
Week 1 (or 1st 5 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (1 hour, 30 minutes /session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (4 hours, 2 hours/session) - Reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participant can be advised to start with <i>Reading</i> and <i>Social Studies</i> first. They are advised to follow the instruction only because they are already tested during Pre-tests.
Week 2 (or 2nd 5 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (1 hour, 30 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (4 hours, 2 hours/session) -Social Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note that the participants may have different needs. The instructor may highly possibly needs to adjust the schedule to have the participant work on his/her week area(s)

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Week /Hours	Program	Notes:
Week 3 (or 3rd 5 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (1 hour, 30 minutes/session) • <i>Official GED Practice Tests</i> (1 hour) - Form DD: Social Studies <p>* If they are ready, send them to take the actual GED test - Social Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours) - Literature and Arts 	<p>weak area(s).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Studies, Literature and Arts, and Science are the relatively easier parts in the GED tests. So the participant can start with them to get a good feeling.
Week 4 (or 4th 5 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (1 hour, 30 minutes/session) • <i>Official GED Practice Tests</i> (1 hour) - Form DD: Literature and Arts • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours) - Science <p>* If they are ready, send them to take the actual GED test - Literature and Arts & Science</p>	
Week 5 (or 5th 5 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (1 hour, 30 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (4 hours, 2 hours/session) - Math 	
Week 6 (or 6th 5 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (1 hour, 30 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (4 hours, 2 hours/session) - Writing 	

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Week /Hours	Program	Notes:
Week 7- Week 9 (or the last 15 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move up to Group A • Keep working on writing and math in the <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> if needed 	

c) Group C

Week	Program	Notes
Week 1 (or 1st 5 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Reading 	If the participant feels challenged, switch to Week 2 (Plan B); otherwise proceed with Week 2 (Plan A)
If the participant feels challenged, switch to Week 2 (Plan B); otherwise proceed with Week 2 (Plan A)		
Week	Plan A	Plan B
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Learning 2000</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Reading
Week	Plan A	Plan B
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Learning 2000</i> (3 hours, divided

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	divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Social Studies	into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Math
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Learning 2000</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Writing
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Math 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i>(3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Writing
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Math
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Writing & Math 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ultimate Speed Reader</i> (90 minutes, 45 minutes/session) • <i>Pre-GED Interactive</i> (3 hours, divided into 2 sessions, or in one session) - Literature and Arts
Week 8 - Week 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move up to Group B 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move up to Group B
Week 14- Week 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move up to Group A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move up to Group A

4. Progress Tracking

a) Individual work progress tracking

Each program used in this course has its tracking and progress recording system. The instructor is to get familiar with the system and know how to retrieve each participant's progress, including program title, subject area, and time they work on. Using the individual work tracking sheet, the instructor is to update their working time on each program and subject area, note the progress of their pre-test and posttest results. The individual work tracking sheet is to go to each individual's folder. (Please see the individual work tracking sheet in the Appendix)

b) Class work progress tracking

The instructor is suggested to develop an Excel worksheet to record the progress at the whole class level. The worksheet can include the following fields:

- ✓ Date
- ✓ Last Name
- ✓ First Name
- ✓ Group
- ✓ Program (Software)
- ✓ Starting time
- ✓ Ending time
- ✓ Total time working on (*Pre-GED Interactive / Learning 2000 / Ultimate Speed Reader / Official GED Practice Tests*)

The instructor is advised to update this worksheet at least once a week and print one out for backup. The printout and the disk containing the file are to stay in the Instructor's folder.

5. Final Assessment

The final assessment is done by monitoring the work and results of participant's perform on the last set of *Official GED Practice Tests*. The participant is expected to achieve scores over than 45 on most or all subjects. For the subject areas that the participant obtains 45 or more points, the instructor can refer the participant to go for the actual test in the particular subject area. If the instructor feels the participant needs more training on test taking skills, an extra brief training can be given at this point.

E. Preparation for the Actual Test

1. Test taking skills

The instructor can follow the following table to advise and help participant in developing good testing skills. It is open to the instructor to implement any other techniques that might help the participant in this aspect.

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Before the test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on the objectives: The GED Tests does not expect the test takers to remember the knowledge except for the math part, but to comprehend the information and answer the questions. • Search for useful information: Scan the reading material, then look through the questions, and go back to the material with questions in mind, looking for answers. • Taking notes: Use a scratch paper, jot down key words, or draw a draft to help building relationships and connections. • Using dictionary and other tools: When preparing the test, look in the dictionary or the tools available in the programs for the words you don't know. Prepare a notebook to write down all the new words and formulas you learned. Go over them from time to time. • Practicing writing regularly: You cannot expect improving your writing overnight. Start from the beginning of your preparation to write from time to time, on different topics. Show your instructor your writing, listen to feedback and suggestions, and revise/improve your writing. • Choosing the subject area you feel most comfortable with to start testing: Register when you feel confident enough to take the first test. Tell your instructor and he/she will give you a referral letter. • Get ready for the test: Purchase and sharpen enough pencils at least three days before the test(s); Prepare some scratch paper and an eraser; Arrange the transportation at least a week before, confirm it at least two days before the test(s); No drinks, the night before; Rest well the night before; Check for the writing tools, paper, eraser, and your ID before leaving for the test(s),
During the Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay calm all the time. Try to relieve the nervousness by deep breathing. • Go through the readings and materials, answer the questions you can first, mark the ones you feel stuck with, and come back later. (Remember, never stick with one question forever). • Be aware of time. Have a control of time. Do your best. Don't

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	<p>pressure yourself too tight or in too much hurry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go over the test if you finish early. Never leave the test before the time is up. Even if you finish early, use the time left to go over the test, especially the questions you are not very sure about when doing them. This could be a lifesaver time, because often you will find something you made a mistake on or you circled the wrong number on the answer sheet.
After the test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to go over the testing experience; put down on a piece of paper what you think you did well and not. Write down what you think could have been better and how. • Talk to your instructor. Let her/him know your experience. Ask for advice. • Don't stop practice. You need to keep practicing until you pass all subjects. If you stop practice and just wait to take another test, chances are your skills will go backwards and your thinking will be slowed. • Keep the instructor informed. If you passed one or more tests, call or come to see the instructor, let her/him know the results. Knowing the results of the participants' real tests will help instructor evaluate the course and make improvement to help other people better.

2. Confidence Building

The Instructor should...	The Participant...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always encouraging the participants: no matter what entry level the participant is at, tell them if they go through the program and be consistently, they will achieve big progress • Help participants feel good about themselves: give positive feedback as often as possible. Let them know that you noticed they had tried their best to come to the class, let them know that it is already a big step that they came. • Appropriately discipline the participants. Remind them that although this is a self-paced program, if they don't commit themselves they won't make progress. Monitor their schedule and keep checking on their progress. Give feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always believe in yourself: Tell yourself "I can do it", and make arrangement so that you can come to the program consistently • Talk to your family and friends. Let them know that you are going to do this program and you need support. Ask them to help establish a realistic schedule so that you can come to the class.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the participant know that you are always available to help. Encourage open communication with the participant. Knowing that someone is there besides the computers lets the participants feel more secure and comfortable. They always want feedback from a live instructor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put pressure on yourself. Letting people know that you are doing the program and give yourself a push. It feels good when you actually accomplished some what you promised, to family, friends, instructor and most importantly, to yourself.

3. Referral Letters

The referral letter should also be saved on the instructor's disk and will be issued to the participant who is ready to take the test(s). With the letter, the participant can take whichever subject area(s) he/she feels most confident about. (Please see the Appendix for the suggested format for the referral letters).

IV. Appendixes

A. Adult Learners and Adult Education

This section of materials is provided to give instructors basic information related to providing successful educational programs in a workplace setting.

Adult Learners

General characteristics of adult learners:

1. Purposeful learning occurs with adults experience a problem or recognize a gap between where they are and where they want to be, then start to draw on resources to acquire the learning they consider necessary to close the gap.
2. One of the most important issues to consider from the adult learner point of view is “What’s in it for me?” An adult needs to know that there is real value in what is being taught. Customize and adapt lessons to suit your participants. Make a regular effort to point out what benefit the instruction has for the participant. Many times participants are unaware of the applications of learning. Make sure you point out possible applications of knowledge.
3. Adult learners insist that learning have relevance and value now, contrasted to youthful learners whose education is largely subject-centered and future-oriented. Most adults are already busy with their jobs and families, so the learning must be worthwhile.
4. Adult learners will drop out of educational situations that are seen as not accomplishing their own agenda.
5. The central organizing principle for adult learning must be around finding solutions for problems adults face. Emphasis must be on helping adults learn to cope with problems they face. Therefore, the instructor must be more *person*-centered than subject-centered.
6. Adult learners are well aware of what they need to know, and they like to participate actively in all phases of their education--assessment, instruction, and evaluation.
7. Many adult learners come into programs with the “baggage” based on a history of negative educational experiences. It is absolutely essential to provide a safe, non-threatening atmosphere where risks can be taken with out fear of humiliation or embarrassment.

Environment

Creating a safe environment for learning is a key factor in success. One of the elements that is part of a safe environment is multicultural sensitivity. The following suggestions should be considered as the lessons are delivered:

1. Use multiple instructional strategies to accommodate all learning styles. See *Learning Styles* for more information on this topic. Also see *Teaching Auditory Learners, Teaching Kinesthetic Learners; Teaching Visual Learners*.
2. Avoid ethnocentrism (belief in the superiority of one's own ethnic group), use of stereotypes, critical or judgmental attitudes, fear, and rigid expectations. Strive to address the various cultures represented in the group. Try the AAAA approach to Cultural Diversity: Awareness; Acceptance/Appreciation; Action
3. Seek to understand the unique motivations of your audience in the workplace. Each worksite has a particular culture. It is important that you strive to understand and become a part of that unique culture.
4. Use materials that are not slanted toward any particular group.

Above all, the instructor must establish a learning environment in which diversity is valued. Participants need to feel that their cultural backgrounds are viewed as assets to the class.

Tips on Teaching

1. Use logical sequences. Avoid jumping into topics without developing background or relevance for the skill at hand.
2. Control length of lessons into manageable chunks. Many employees come into classes at the end of a long and tiring day. Pace lessons so participants can have short breaks.
3. Give recognition and encouragement. It is vital that you recognize and encourage all your participants' progress toward their individual goals. Unfortunately, adult learners are often not supported by friends and family who view time spent in class as time taken away from them.
4. Use coaching. Model new skills. Point out the problems or pitfalls many participants have with lessons. Repeat explanations several times or a period of time and several ways to accommodate all learning styles. Be there for them.

5. Encourage involvement. Make sure participants hear you validate how important it is to learn new skills. Techniques that make provisions for active involvement of participants will achieve learning faster than more passive teaching techniques.
6. Give feedback. Adults need to be reassured that they are on track. Give feedback often, and be sure to give negative feedback along with something positive.
7. Use summaries and advance organizers. When materials are detailed or involved, help participants see the “big picture.”
8. Questions will help you assess how your participants are understanding. Make sure they are not accusatory in tone. It is possible to inadvertently press a “hot button” based on a participants’ unpleasant school memories. Maintain a safe atmosphere for participants when questioning them.
 - Direct questions are usually *yes* or *no*, or short answer. They are easy to control.
 - Open-ended questions are more likely to prompt discussion. They are not as easy to control.

B. Interview Protocol

The following interview protocol can be followed for the purpose of the first orientation / Interviewing to acquire background and motivation information from the participants.

Interviewing Date: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Interviewer: _____

1. How did you know about our program?
2. What makes you decide to come down to the lab today?
3. Why do you think you need a GED certificate?
4. How long has it been since you were at school the last time?
5. Which level were you at when you were at school last time?
6. What was your approximate GPA when you were at school last time?

7. Why did you leave school?
8. What was your favorite subject / the subject you did best at school? What is the subject you like the least / you felt most difficult with?
9. Do you have a job now? If yes, what kind of job? Full-time? Part-time? How long have you been on this current job?
10. Do you read regularly/sometimes for studying purpose / your own enjoyment?
11. Is English your first language? If no, what is?
12. Have you used computers before? If yes, what operating system, when and for what purpose?
13. If you will be enrolled in this class, do you think your family and friends will support you? Do you think you will be able to come with a schedule to work in the lab?
14. Is there anything else you want to tell me about?

Interviewing Conclusion:

- Strong motivation: Yes No
- Good academic background: Yes No
- Having computer skills: Yes No
- English as the first language: Yes No

C. Reading Progress Scale (Will be attached)

D. Referral Letter

The following is a suggested format for the Referral Letter issued by the instructor for the participant to bring to take the GED Test(s).

Instructor
Workplace Education and Training
College of Education, Wayne State
University
Detroit, MI 48202



Date:

GED Testing Center
(Address)

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to refer one of our students in the Accelerated GED program, (name) to come to your center to take the following test(s):

- Social Studies
- Science
- Literature and Arts
- Writing
- Math

(Check the one that applies).

If you any questions, please contact me at (Phone number). Thank you.

Yours truly,

(Instructor)

E. GED Testing Center Information (will be attached)

F. Individual Sign-in and Tracking Sheet

Site: _____

Recorder: _____

Client Name:					
Pre-test	Computer <input type="checkbox"/>	Social Studies		Science	
	CC DD EE FF				
Working logs					
Date	<i>Time working on Programs</i>				
	Learning 2000	Pre-GED Interactive	Official GED Practice Tests	Ultimate Speed Reader	
Total	hrs.	hrs.	hrs.		

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Achievement						
Post Test	Computer <input type="checkbox"/>	Writing Score	Social Studies	Science	Math	Literature
	CC DD EE FF					
	Paper-based <input type="checkbox"/> AA					

G. Program Results

For fall term 1999, which started from September 17, 1999, 70 participants signed up for the Accelerated GED class at 3 locations: All Saints Neighborhood Center, Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation and Warren Conner Development Coalition. There were also 7 more participants carried over from the summer term. Out of the 77 participants in the fall term, 1999 at the three locations, 40 came to the program for 3 or more sessions, which is the minimum for us to determine if the participant was a regular participant to the program or not. The participants were placed in three general groups (A,B and C). And some had the comprehension in Group A and Math in Group B or vice versa. As of Feb. 28, 2000, according to information we gathered, 9 participants out of the 40 participants have passed all five of the GED Test. A minimum of 5 others had passed at least one of the GED Tests.

For winter term 2000, which started from January 18, 2000, 30 new participant were enrolled for the GED program at All Saints neighborhood Center and Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation, and 7 more were carried over from fall term, 1999. As of Feb. 28, 2000. Two out of the 37 participants of this group have passed all the 5 tests of the GED Test. This class is still in process and further data is to be gathered to complete this report.

H. References

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Keup, J.R. (1998). Using technology in remedial education. Los Angeles, CA: ERIC Clearinghouse for Community Colleges. (ED421180).

Rachal, J.R. (1995). Adult reading achievement comparing computer-assisted and traditional approaches: A comprehensive review of the experimental literature. Reading Research and Instruction. 34(3), 239-258.

1. Initial Model & Reaction through ListServ Discussions

1. Consensus Summary

Two major sources of information were used to check on the required elements for an accelerated GED exam preparation course. First, four interviews were conducted with individuals who had either managed or organized a GED Preparation curriculum. Two individuals were employees of Detroit Public Schools, one was the former director of not-for-profit agency, and the fourth was a GED instructor who now is a salesperson for a commercial software company.

The second stage was to send a preliminary set of best practices out to two listservs that have large numbers of workplace literacy and adult education practitioners and researchers (National Institute for Literacy and the National Workforce Assistance Collaborative). The idea was to confirm or modify the initial best practice model.

The results are described below.

1. Initial Assessment. A GED accelerated program must begin with a rigorous front-end assessment process. The process would operate at two-levels. The first level would screen out those who have limited chance for success in an accelerated course. Second, for those who pass the screen, good diagnostic tests are given so that an individual prescription for skill development/improvement can be created.

Specific recommendations for the first level of testing include giving the TABE Level D, Form 7.

- If Reading and Math scores > 9.0 , then they should sign up to take the GED without instruction.
- If scores are between 7.5 and 9.0, then they could profit from the accelerated GED.
- If scores are < 7.5 , they need remedial work such as pre-GED or basic adult literacy.

The second level of testing is applied to those most likely to profit from the accelerated course. This would consist of giving diagnostic tests covering the five subject areas of GED: Mathematics, Writing Skills, Social Studies, Science, and Interpreting Literature and the Arts. A recommended source is to use the Official GED Practice Tests published by Steck-Vaughan. The former head of the GED Testing Service recommends that the Literature test be given first so that an additional sort of high and low scorers might be made (above 50 vs. below 30 in GED test score units). He also indicates that, in general, national examinees perform least well on the Mathematics and Writing Skills tests with math sub areas of algebra, geometry, and number relations being the weakest.

2. Qualified Instructors. Instructors / facilitators must be selected / hired / trained to deliver such a course. What are the performance-based aptitudes & experiences used selecting such teachers? What are some the key "value-added" behaviors or functions displayed by these teachers? What characteristics differentiate them from the typical instructors?

The general consensus was that experienced GED instructors who have a strong record of successful graduates are the instructors to find. It was recommended that teachers who have track records with 75% to 80% of their students passing are top candidates. In addition, a strong understanding of the fundamentals for teaching adults is needed as well as sensitivity to self-concept issues and fears of traditional teaching methods.

A recommendation was also made to have a more intense course schedule than the typical adult education schedule of two days a week for two hours. At least something around a half-day in length four days a week seems to be a more effective schedule.

3. Quality Materials and Courseware. High quality materials are an integral part of the program. We gathered recommendations for print-based and computer-based materials for purchase.

Most experts thought that a mix of at least two of the following is the most preferred scenario: computer, print-based, group work, and one-on-one coaching. The following publishers were most recommended:

Print materials (ranked): Steck-Vaughn; Contemporary, Scott-Foresman. However, it should be noted that the latter two have worked with the GED staff. S-V is most recommended by instructors. It was also recommended to stay away from other publishers who sell their books on the general market (Barron's , ARCO).

Computer-based: There has been one primarily used by a variety of programs—INVEST Learning's Destination 2.0, formerly called GED 2000 (contact: 800.927.9997). There are a number of others worth consideration including PLATO from TRO Learning and PASS KEY from McGraw-Hill. The major drawback is the expense of initial purchase and installation for all.

Another computer-based program, although new on the market, has received some good reviews. The product is GED Interactive from Contemporary Books (contact: 800.621.1918; Randy Pertler, X 338) Three separate CD-ROMS are available: Pre-GED, GED, and Practice Tests.

4. Tracking System. The last major element is a tracking system so that the instructor knows how much progress each participant is making and can prescribe or coach an individual over trouble spots. This system helps promote a flexible "open-entry, open-exit" that we probably need to be successful. The components of the system include a competency list for each person based on the original assessment, a checklist system to "tick off" competencies as acquired, a method for storing the information so that updating is efficient.

Such a system can be paper-based requiring a file cabinet and individual folders for each student. The computer-based systems generally include some management component to facilitate tracking, however, there is no 'off-the-shelf' computer-based system that any of the sources recommend.

Second Language Testing. In Michigan, passing the Spanish Language version of the exam can award a GED certificate. However, this is not universally true according to the former director of GED testing. He states:

Check with the GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036 (phone: 202-939-9490) for the policies in any specific state. The GED Spanish language tests were built for use in Puerto Rico, but many states also use them.

This may be something that we need to check out for Illinois.

2. ListServ Discussion

Request Sent Out to NIFL and NWAC Listservs

I'm looking for a model approach for developing and delivering an "accelerated" GED preparation course (or modules). The model must be something that can be implemented at local sites (i.e., transferable or portable), be applicable for small groups (say 3 to 12 participants), and have a proven record of successful graduates.

My business is workplace-related so we currently have no GED capability. However, we have been asked by a number of local community-based organizations (CBO's) to put together a program to be jointly implemented. It would also be fair to say that with the cutbacks in adult education funding in Michigan, the local school systems also have very limited capability.

It is likely that a significant portion of our audience will be Hispanic and have limited English proficiency.

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Here's what we know so far.

1) Such a program must begin with a rigorous front-end assessment process. The process would operate at two-levels. The first level would screen out those who have limited chance for success in an accelerated course. Second, for those who pass the screen, good diagnostic tests are given so that an individual prescription for skill development/improvement can be created.

Assuming this, what specific tests are recommended?

2) Instructors / facilitators must be selected / hired / trained to deliver such a course. What are the performance-based aptitudes & experiences we should look for in selecting such teachers? What are some the key "value-added" behaviors or functions displayed by these teachers that differentiate them from just OK instructors?

3) High quality materials must be used. We are looking for recommendations for print-based and computer-based materials for purchase. GED experts we have talked to recommend a course that uses a mix of computer, print-based, group work, and one-on-one coaching. What is your opinion?

4) The last major element is a tracking system so that the instructor knows how much progress each participant is making and can prescribe or coach an individual over trouble spots. This system help promote a flexible "open-entry, open-exit" that we probably need to be successful.

One further point: I have been told that a GED certificate can be awarded by passing the Spanish Language version of the exam. Is this universally true? across the US?

This request will be cross-posted on the NWAC listserv.

Thank you for your response to either individual questions or on a model.

Dale Brandenburg

Some Notable Responses

From: (the former Director of the GED testing service operated by ACE)

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Director

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Dale, Paths cross again!

Although I am currently operating a Sylvan Learning Center, I worked for the GED Testing Service at the American Council on Education from 1978-91. My suggestions below are based on experience from that time--still relevant as the tests have not changed (except for new parallel forms) since 1988. If you have trouble locating the publications, let me know and I'll mail you copies.

Which tests?

I outlined some ways that the Official GED Practice Tests could be used in an individualized, assessment-based system. The article (title: Toward A Comprehensive GED Assessment System) was published in the May 1991 issue of Adult Learning (Vol. 2, No. 7). Other articles in that issue are related and also may be helpful. By all means, include the Official GED Practice Tests (publisher is Steck Vaughan), because they are built by the GED Testing Service (creator of the GED Tests) and report results on standard score scales equated with that for the actual GED Tests.

High quality materials must be used.

For print materials, use those from Contemporary Books and Scott-Foresman. These are generally closely related to the skills on the tests. Avoid those from the bookstore (e.g., ARCO, Barron's) as their publishers have not worked with the GEDTS staff to ensure appropriate content and difficulty.

I'm not familiar with the current computer software.

a tracking system

ACCELERATED GED INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

Definitely a good idea. Some years ago (actually, in 1976), I outlined some system requirements in a chapter ("Placement, Monitoring, and Evaluation System") in a book (A flexible design for health professions education--editor was Jacobs, publisher Wiley). The technology is clearly dated, but the ideas may be helpful.

GED certificate can be awarded by passing the Spanish Language version of the exam. Is this universally true across the US?

Not universally. Check with the GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036 (phone: 202-939-9490) for the policies in any specific state. The GED Spanish language tests were built for use in Puerto Rico, but many states also use them.

From Eunice Askov: Director of the Institute for Adult Literacy at Penn State

From: Eunice Askov <enal@psu.edu>

Subject: Accelerated GED Course

Dale, good questions. On the GED in Spanish, you need to check your state dept. of ed. I know PA allows it. Why agonize with English when they need the certificate? Figure out what they really need English for and teach them that. (I have observed lots of workers speaking Spanish on the job!) The intensive instruction model that the military uses has always intrigued me. Memphis adopted that model (because they have lots of military) in their adult literacy programs. They seemed to think it was quite successful to offer instruction all morning or all day. We are stuck with the old ABE model of 2 times per week @ 2 hours. That really isn't enough anyway. Good luck. Nickie

ACCELERATED GED INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

From: David Joost, Director of Adult Basic Education and Resource Development, Wharton County Junior College, TX

The Adult Education program at Wharton County Junior College has developed a curriculum guide that describes a "turn key" solution to teaching in a multi-level setting. Its curriculum is individualized, competency-based, computer assisted and self-paced. It contains information about instructional materials and assessment. Locally developed it is not for sale but we request \$25 to cover printing and shipping. It has been used successfully for many years. Training in its use is available from our staff if you chose travel here.

If you are interested. Please contact me.

David Joost
Director of Adult Basic Education and Resource Development
Wharton County Junior College
911 Boling Hwy.
Wharton, Texas 77488

409 532-6301

From: Oscar Mireles

To answer some of your questions

1) Omega School uses the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) Locator test. It is a 25-question exam that gives a good indication of where each students reading level is. 4 out of the 5 GED exams are reading based so the students reading level is critical for success. Overall, adult basis education students are very nervous about test, so I would advise not providing a large battery of test in the beginning.

2. Teachers, the key skills are patience and being a good listener. Because your students are adults they have skills, competency and life experiences. they do not need a drill sergeant to help them master their basic skills. Previous experience as a tutor would be more helpful.

3) Contemporary and Steck Vaughn both have excellent GED and Pre_GED materials. GED 2000 by Steck Vaughn is an excellent GED computer based instructional materials. The materials have a pre-test which serves as a diagnostic component and directs the student to materials in the books which will help them with the materials they have not mastered yet. Individualized instruction is the best way to go. Math and writing can be taught in small groups (but should be by approximately grade level).

ACCELERATED GED INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

4) tracking system

we have weekly new student orientations to facilitate entry and two GED graduation ceremonies to assist with exit. We serve 500 students with 3 full -time and 5 part-time instructors.

Our local technical college offers the Spanish GED, however they recommend (rather insist...) that the English GED is taken if student plans to attend school there.

You can visit our website for more details: <http://www.tds.net/omega/home.htm>