

# GED Prep: Language Arts, Reading

## Course Description

The GED Prep: Language Arts, Reading course covers the material necessary to prepare students for the GED Language Arts, Reading exam. Students will learn to interpret and understand different types of nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and dramatic writing, as well as master the essential skills of comprehension, application, analysis, and synthesis. Throughout the course, writing assignments, practice exercises, quizzes, and exams help students build skills and demonstrate knowledge.

As students explore this course, they'll encounter many of the elements that keep a language "alive." They will accomplish this by reading and listening to recordings of several different types of writing, including short stories, speeches, poetry, novels, essays, drama, and research writing. Students also will learn the secrets of successful reading, and skills to help them expand their vocabulary.

## Overview

### Unit 1: Interpreting Nonfiction

- Lesson 1: Predictions and Questions
- Lesson 2: Intended Meanings
- Lesson 3: Central Ideas
- Lesson 4: Interactions and Relationships in Text
- Lesson 5: The Overall Picture

### Unit 2: Understanding Fiction

- Lesson 1: Types of Literature
- Lesson 2: Vocabulary Acquisition
- Lesson 3: Elements of Plot
- Lesson 4: Historical Context and Exposition
- Lesson 5: Plot
- Lesson 6: Denouement
- Lesson 7: Reading Strategies for Prose Literature
- Lesson 8: Understanding the Basic Elements
- Lesson 9: Identifying Plot in "Coffee Will Make You Black" by April Sinclair
- Lesson 10: Analyzing Setting in "LaPuerta" by Jose Antonio Burciaga
- Lesson 11: Examining Characters in "Secrets" by Judy Troy
- Lesson 12: Recognizing Point of View
- Lesson 13: Identifying Themes in "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant
- Lesson 14: Common Literary Devices

### Unit 3: Understanding Poetry

- Lesson 1: Narrative Poetry: The Ballad
- Lesson 2: Narrative Poetry: The Epic
- Lesson 3: Narrative Poetry: The Romance

### Unit 4: Understanding Drama

- Lesson 1: Introduction to Drama
- Lesson 2: Background to Julius Caesar
- Lesson 3: The Tragedy of Julius Caesar
- Lesson 4: Archetypes and Themes

## Objectives

Students completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following skills:

### Unit 1: Interpreting Nonfiction

- Predict the purpose of a nonfiction text based on the table of contents, the title, headings, and visuals.
- Access background information and prior knowledge to connect nonfiction text to similar topics or related ideas.
- Differentiate among narrative, persuasive, expository, and descriptive texts.
- Identify the types of figurative language that are used to extend literal meaning.
- Determine the author's purpose for using figurative meaning, and the impact of figurative meaning on the reader.
- Demonstrate reading strategies that construct and confirm meaning in nonfiction.
- Describe the five different types of one-sentence summaries.

### Unit 2: Understanding Fiction

- Apply the "PAT SAID" acronym to determine character traits when analyzing a story for characterization.
- Analyze dialogue in a story to determine not only a character's personality, but also the fears, conflicts, or needs that drive a character and provide the motivation for action.
- Demonstrate understanding of texts by using the "Somebody Wanted But So" reading strategy.
- Understand and identify elements of fiction by using a plot-structure diagram.
- Identify the five basic elements of fictional prose: plot, setting, character, point of view, and theme.
- Identify examples of the three kinds of irony, and explain the differences between them.
- Identify and analyze the two necessary components of setting: time period and location.
- Analyze a character's speaking style for clues that reveal something about his or her personality and background.
- Explain "omniscient point of view" as a narrative vantage point, and identify the writing techniques an author can incorporate to signal that a story is being told from an omniscient point of view.
- Explain the first-person and third-person points of view as narrative vantage points, and identify the writing techniques an author can incorporate to signal that a story is being told from either of these points of view.
- Identify how the conflict(s) a protagonist encounters in a given story are resolved, and what insights or lessons the character has learned as a result.
- Define the characteristics of a poem: rhyme, rhythm, and meter.
- Describe the various elements of drama and their functions: script, characters, stage directions, setting, and props.
- Recognize the plot structure of a piece of dramatic literature, and how it fits into Freytag's Plot Pyramid.
- Compare and contrast fiction and nonfiction characters.
- Recognize a work of fiction, as well as a work of nonfiction.

### Unit 3: Understanding Poetry

- Identify the three primary forms of poetry as narrative, dramatic, and lyric, and explain the purpose of each.
- Identify the three genres most commonly recognized as narrative poetry, including the "ballad," "epic" and "romance."
- Identify the common characteristics of narrative poetry, including subject matter conveyed through words and phrases arranged in metric lines of verse to provide a distinct rhythm; and stanzas displaying a distinct number of lines having a rhyming pattern, and/or a refrain.
- Analyze the literal meanings of ballads, and any geographical/historical references that can aid in the understanding of the poet's intent.
- Identify historical, religious, and literary allusions when examining a given romance tale, and explain how these references enhance understanding of the story and its intended message/theme.
- Analyze the literal meaning of and symbolic intention behind the story and mood of a ballad.

- Explain the differences between the two classifications of epics—folk and art—and identify several examples of each.
- Compare the similarities and differences among ballads, epics, and romances.
- Identify examples of metaphors and similes when analyzing the text of a given ballad, and explain how they enhance the meaning and emotion in the story.
- Explore the similarities and differences between ballads and the folk songs of the American West.
- Identify rhythm, rhyme, and word sounds (such as alliteration and onomatopoeia) within a ballad, and analyze how they enhance the meaning and emotion of the story.

#### **Unit 4: Understanding Drama**

- Identify and explain the five basic aspects of staging, and how they aid in the audience's understanding of a play's action and meaning.
- Explain the origins of drama, and trace its historical development in ancient Greece from 600-200 B.C.
- Explain how the present-day International Thespian Society has its origins in Ancient Greece.
- Summarize the influences of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides on the history of drama.
- Identify and explain the following modern theatrical terms, and how they relate to Ancient Greek theatre: orchestra pit, scene, proscenium arch, and satire.
- Analyze stage directions to discern specific details including location, location details, season, character description, and staging.
- Recognize how the nine stage areas are utilized by the playwright to present the setting, and how they help the reader follow the actions of the characters.
- Define the terms associated with plot: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution (denouement).

In addition, students will develop the following general skills:

- Use the Internet to gain useful information.
- Develop a sense of class membership, using discussion groups and email to communicate with teacher and classmates.

#### **Activities and Assessments**

- **22 Writing Assignments** – Throughout the course, students will apply the knowledge and skills learned from course content to a wide variety of teacher-graded writing assignments.
- **2 Online Discussion Group Assignments** – Teacher-graded discussion group assignments will develop students' communication and writing skills.
- **26 Quizzes, 4 Unit Exams, and 1 Final Exam** – Computer-graded lesson quizzes, unit exams, and one final exam will assess student competency throughout the course.