

MiM-Essay

GRE Verbal Reasoning Sample Paper 2026

A free practice set for students searching for GRE Verbal question papers: 27 original questions with answers across Text Completion, Sentence Equivalence, and Reading Comprehension.

9 Text Completion

8 Sentence Equivalence

10 Reading Comprehension

Answer Key Included

Important: This is an unofficial practice resource created by MiM-Essay. It is not an ETS publication and does not reproduce copyrighted GRE questions. The questions are original and are designed only to resemble the reasoning skills and broad question formats tested on the current GRE General Test.

Updated: August 2026

How to Use This Practice PDF

The current GRE General Test has two scored Verbal Reasoning sections. Verbal Reasoning measures your ability to analyse written material, understand relationships among words and concepts, identify important ideas in passages, and draw conclusions from the information presented.

Question type	Current GRE Verbal format	This PDF
Text Completion	One to three blanks; one answer per blank, no partial credit	9 original questions
Sentence Equivalence	Six options; select two that produce sentences alike in meaning	8 original questions
Reading Comprehension	Short and medium passages with main idea, inference, and purpose questions	10 original questions

Suggested timing: Give yourself 12 minutes for Text Completion, 10 minutes for Sentence Equivalence, and 15 minutes for Reading Comprehension. This is a mini practice set, not a full-length adaptive mock exam.

Before You Start

- For Text Completion, predict your own word for each blank before reading the options.
- For Sentence Equivalence, both selected answers must produce sentences with equivalent meanings — a correct-sounding word with no partner is a trap.
- Answer Reading Comprehension questions from the passage only, never from outside knowledge.
- Track errors by type: vocabulary gap, missed signal word, misread scope, or careless error.

Current exam structure verified against ets.org (GRE General Test), August 2026.

Section 1: Text Completion

Questions 1–9. Select the best answer for each blank. Where a question has two blanks, you must answer both correctly to receive credit.

Q1. Although the scientist's early theories were considered _____ by many researchers, later discoveries provided evidence that her ideas were surprisingly _____.

Blank (i): A. conventional B. speculative C. irrelevant D. outdated E. simplistic

Blank (ii): A. inaccurate B. influential C. prescient D. impractical E. contradictory

Q2. The author's argument appears convincing at first; however, a closer examination reveals that it relies on several _____ assumptions that have not been adequately _____.

Blank (i): A. questionable B. innovative C. transparent D. fundamental E. logical

Blank (ii): A. dismissed B. justified C. examined D. repeated E. expanded

Q3. Unlike her predecessors, who viewed technological progress with suspicion, the researcher adopted a more _____ perspective, arguing that innovation could be a powerful tool for solving social problems.

- A. pessimistic
- B. cautious
- C. optimistic
- D. indifferent
- E. hostile

Q4. The historian's biography avoids portraying its subject as either a hero or a villain; instead, it presents a _____ account that acknowledges both achievements and shortcomings.

- A. biased
- B. balanced
- C. exaggerated
- D. simplistic
- E. dismissive

Q5. The company's decision to expand internationally was not merely a response to immediate market conditions; rather, it was part of a _____ strategy designed to ensure long-term growth.

- A. temporary
- B. reactive
- C. comprehensive
- D. accidental
- E. uncertain

Q6. The critic argued that the novel's complexity was not a flaw but rather its greatest _____, allowing readers to discover new meanings with each reading.

- A. weakness
- B. limitation
- C. advantage
- D. obstacle
- E. contradiction

Q7. Because the archaeological evidence was incomplete, researchers remained _____ about the exact purpose of the ancient structure, offering only _____ explanations.

Blank (i): A. certain B. skeptical C. uncertain D. enthusiastic E. convinced

Blank (ii): A. definitive B. tentative C. unreasonable D. exaggerated E. unrelated

Q8. The politician's speech was carefully crafted to appear _____, but critics argued that its apparent neutrality concealed a clear ideological agenda.

- A. impartial
- B. aggressive
- C. emotional
- D. careless
- E. controversial

Q9. While some economists predicted that the policy would produce immediate benefits, others warned that its consequences were far more _____ and would become apparent only over time.

- A. predictable
- B. gradual
- C. obvious
- D. insignificant
- E. temporary

Section 2: Sentence Equivalence

Questions 10–17. Select the **two** answer choices that complete the sentence and create sentences alike in meaning. Both answers must be correct to receive credit.

Q10. The professor's explanation was so _____ that even students unfamiliar with the topic were able to understand the complicated concept.

- A. obscure
- B. clear
- C. lucid
- D. confusing
- E. complicated
- F. ambiguous

Q11. The manager was criticized for making decisions based on _____ opinions rather than objective analysis.

- A. impartial
- B. biased
- C. prejudiced
- D. balanced
- E. neutral
- F. rational

Q12. The discovery was considered _____ because it challenged long-established beliefs about human evolution.

- A. revolutionary
- B. ordinary
- C. groundbreaking
- D. insignificant
- E. conventional
- F. predictable

Q13. Although the proposal seemed promising initially, experts later found it to be _____ because it ignored several practical limitations.

- A. feasible
- B. unrealistic
- C. impractical
- D. achievable
- E. workable
- F. sensible

Q14. The author's writing style is admired for being _____, expressing complex ideas without unnecessary complexity.

- A. concise
- B. verbose
- C. straightforward
- D. complicated
- E. unclear
- F. elaborate

Q15. The scientist remained _____ about the results of the experiment until additional evidence confirmed the findings.

- A. skeptical
- B. doubtful
- C. certain
- D. confident
- E. convinced
- F. assured

Q16. The company's financial problems were _____ by poor management decisions made over several years.

- A. caused
- B. intensified
- C. resolved
- D. worsened
- E. prevented
- F. eliminated

Q17. The researcher's conclusions were regarded as _____ because they were supported by extensive data collected over many years.

- A. credible
- B. reliable
- C. questionable
- D. doubtful
- E. uncertain
- F. flawed

Section 3: Reading Comprehension

Questions 18–27. Answer each question on the basis of what is stated or implied in the corresponding passage.

Passage 1

For much of history, cities developed near rivers because waterways provided transportation, fertile agricultural land, and access to drinking water. However, modern urban planning has increasingly challenged the assumption that rivers are always beneficial locations for human settlement. Flood risks, pollution, and climate change have forced many cities to reconsider their relationship with nearby waterways.

Some urban planners argue that cities should not attempt to eliminate the influence of rivers but instead adapt to them. Strategies such as restoring wetlands, creating flood-resistant infrastructure, and designing public spaces near waterways can allow cities to benefit from rivers while reducing potential harm.

Others contend that such approaches may be insufficient as climate change accelerates. They argue that some densely populated areas may eventually need to relocate away from vulnerable regions. The debate reflects a broader question in urban development: whether societies should modify natural environments or adapt themselves to changing conditions.

Q18. The passage primarily discusses:

- A. why ancient cities were unsuccessful
- B. the changing relationship between cities and rivers
- C. methods for eliminating climate change
- D. why modern cities avoid waterways
- E. the history of agricultural development

Q19. According to the passage, rivers historically attracted settlements because they provided:

- A. protection from all natural disasters
- B. opportunities for transportation and agriculture
- C. freedom from environmental challenges
- D. locations away from population centers
- E. alternatives to urban development

Q20. The author mentions restoring wetlands and flood-resistant infrastructure primarily to illustrate:

- A. methods of adapting cities to rivers
- B. reasons cities should abandon waterways
- C. failures of modern engineering
- D. causes of climate change
- E. historical construction techniques

Q21. The second group of urban planners mentioned in the passage would most likely agree that:

- A. rivers have no value for cities
- B. adaptation strategies may eventually become inadequate
- C. wetlands should never be restored
- D. urban development should stop completely
- E. climate change is unrelated to cities

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Reading Comprehension – Continued

Passage 2

Scientific progress often depends not only on discovering new information but also on questioning existing assumptions. Throughout history, many important breakthroughs occurred when researchers challenged widely accepted ideas. However, skepticism toward established knowledge does not automatically produce progress. Productive scientific criticism requires evidence, careful reasoning, and willingness to revise conclusions when new information emerges.

This balance between questioning and accepting knowledge is essential because science advances through both continuity and disruption. Researchers rely on previous discoveries while remaining open to replacing explanations that no longer fit available evidence.

Q22. The passage suggests that scientific progress requires:

- A. rejecting all previous discoveries
- B. accepting all established theories
- C. questioning ideas while using evidence
- D. avoiding disagreement among researchers
- E. focusing only on revolutionary ideas

Q23. The author describes skepticism toward established knowledge as:

- A. always harmful
- B. necessary but insufficient by itself
- C. unrelated to scientific progress
- D. a replacement for evidence
- E. the only method of discovery

Q24. The phrase "continuity and disruption" most nearly refers to:

- A. preserving some ideas while replacing others
- B. avoiding scientific disagreements
- C. preventing new discoveries
- D. rejecting traditional research methods
- E. eliminating uncertainty completely

Passage 3

Many organizations assume that productivity improves when employees work longer hours. However, research on workplace performance suggests that excessive working hours can reduce efficiency by increasing fatigue and decreasing concentration. Some companies have therefore experimented with shorter work schedules, arguing that improved focus during working hours may compensate for reduced time spent at work.

Critics of shorter schedules argue that such approaches may not be suitable for every industry. Jobs requiring constant availability or physical presence may face greater challenges in adopting flexible arrangements. As a result, the

effectiveness of reduced working hours depends largely on the nature of the work and how organizations measure productivity.

Q25. The main purpose of the passage is to:

- A. prove that shorter work schedules always succeed
- B. examine arguments surrounding reduced working hours
- C. criticize employees who work long hours
- D. explain why productivity cannot be measured
- E. describe workplace history

Q26. According to the passage, excessive working hours may:

- A. increase concentration
- B. improve efficiency in every industry
- C. reduce productivity through fatigue
- D. eliminate workplace problems
- E. guarantee better results

Q27. The author would most likely agree that shorter work schedules:

- A. should replace traditional schedules everywhere
- B. are ineffective in all workplaces
- C. may work depending on the type of work involved
- D. reduce productivity permanently
- E. are only useful for managers

Answer Key – Text Completion

Q1: B, C – speculative, prescient. "Although" signals contrast: early doubt (speculative) versus later vindication. "Prescient" captures ideas that anticipated what was later confirmed.

Q2: A, C – questionable, examined. The argument only *appears* convincing, so the assumptions must be doubtful and never properly scrutinised.

Q3: C – optimistic. "Unlike her predecessors, who viewed progress with suspicion" demands the opposite of suspicion.

Q4: B – balanced. Neither hero nor villain, acknowledging both achievements and shortcomings, defines a balanced account.

Q5: C – comprehensive. "Not merely a response to immediate conditions" plus "long-term growth" points to a broad, planned strategy.

Q6: C – advantage. "Not a flaw but rather its greatest _____" reverses the negative, so a positive word is required.

Q7: C, B – uncertain, tentative. Incomplete evidence produces doubt about the purpose and only provisional explanations.

Q8: A – impartial. The second clause refers to "apparent neutrality", which restates the blank.

Q9: B – gradual. Consequences that "become apparent only over time" are slow to emerge, contrasting with "immediate benefits".

Answer Key – Sentence Equivalence

Q10: B, C – clear, lucid. Both mean easily understood, matching students who could grasp a complicated concept.

Q11: B, C – biased, prejudiced. Both contrast with "objective analysis" and are near-synonyms of each other.

Q12: A, C – revolutionary, groundbreaking. Both describe a discovery that overturns long-established beliefs.

Q13: B, C – unrealistic, impractical. Ignoring practical limitations makes the proposal unworkable; both words carry that sense.

Q14: A, C – concise, straightforward. Expressing complex ideas without unnecessary complexity is economical and direct.

Q15: A, B – skeptical, doubtful. Waiting for additional evidence indicates withheld belief, not confidence.

Q16: B, D – intensified, worsened. The problems already existed; poor decisions made them more severe.

Q17: A, B – credible, reliable. Extensive supporting data makes conclusions trustworthy.

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Answer Key – Reading Comprehension

Q18: B. The passage traces how the assumption that rivers are always beneficial has been challenged and debated.

Q19: B. The first sentence lists transportation, fertile agricultural land, and drinking water.

Q20: A. These examples are given as strategies that let cities adapt to rivers rather than eliminate their influence.

Q21: B. The second group contends that adaptation "may be insufficient as climate change accelerates".

Q22: C. Progress requires questioning assumptions, but productive criticism needs evidence and careful reasoning.

Q23: B. The passage states skepticism "does not automatically produce progress" — needed, but not enough on its own.

Q24: A. Continuity is relying on previous discoveries; disruption is replacing explanations that no longer fit.

Q25: B. The passage presents the case for shorter schedules and then the critics' case, without endorsing either.

Q26: C. Excessive hours "reduce efficiency by increasing fatigue and decreasing concentration".

Q27: C. The closing sentence makes effectiveness depend on the nature of the work.

How to Review Your Score

Text Completion

___/9

Sentence Equivalence

___/8

Reading Comp

___/10

Score Interpretation

Correct answers	Estimated performance
24–27	Excellent GRE Verbal readiness
20–23	Strong performance
15–19	Needs targeted improvement
Below 15	Focus on vocabulary and reading strategy

This mini set is not designed to predict an official GRE score. Instead, use it to identify where your reasoning breaks down.

If you missed...	What to review next
Text Completion	Signal words (although, however, rather), predicting the blank, secondary word meanings
Sentence Equivalence	Pairing synonyms, avoiding a correct-sounding word with no partner
Main idea questions	Passage structure, author's purpose, distinguishing scope from detail
Inference questions	What is supported versus what is merely plausible; extreme wording traps
Function questions	Why a detail appears — the role it plays in the argument, not what it says

Best next step: After using this PDF, practice with the official POWERPREP tools on ets.org. ETS provides free practice tests and a set of real GRE practice questions.

Source and Accuracy Note

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