**Lesson Planning for GED Tutors**

**LFL staff can provide guidance on whether your learner is ready for GED-level study or needs more fundamental skill development.** Staff may recommend GED-level study materials if the learner scores ABE 4+ on CASAS reading/math, or 140+ on the GED Ready.

If the learner is ready for **GED level materials**, choose any GED-specific resource such as *Scoreboost* workbooks, Steck-Vaughn or Kaplan study guides, *Essential Reading Skills*, etc. Any resource designed specifically for the 2014 GED should be fine. (The date on the materials should be 2014 or later.)

GED prep materials are typically broken down into chapters by **skill**. For example, a typical GED Reading textbook will have chapters on discerning the author’s purpose, making inferences, evaluating evidence, etc. A Social Studies textbook might have lessons on reading maps, interpreting political cartoons, analyzing primary sources, comparing and contrasting points of view, etc. Studying for Social Studies and Science involves building fundamental knowledge about history, government, economics, geography, biology, chemistry, ecology, etc. However, success on these tests seems to depend more on reading, thinking, and graphic literacy skills than comprehensive knowledge of the content.

Typically, LFL learners focus on **one GED test at a time**: Language Arts, Math, Science or Social Studies. After they pass one test, they move on to the next. Tutors should use a core text and follow the “path” laid out by that text. Use supplemental materials for additional explanation or practice as needed.

**A GED lesson** might look like this:

1. Prior to the Lesson: **Plan**
   * Preview the upcoming chapter to make sure you understand the material.
   * Think through how you will explain or demonstrate the concepts.
   * As needed, view examples of how to teach the concepts. Some recommended sources:
     + YouTube: Search for GEDStudyGuideTV or GEDTestingService
     + Khan Academy offers free online lessons in math, science, social studies, and grammar. Reading/writing are included under SAT prep.
     + Apex is a web-based program with lessons GED prep as well as English and Math Foundations. See staff for an account.
2. **Introduce** the lesson to the learner: “Today we’re going to start a chapter on determining the author’s purpose. For example, you might need to read a text and decide if the author’s purpose is to inform, entertain, persuade, or something else.”
3. **Read the explanatory material** at the beginning of the chapter with the learner. If you have found a good supplemental resource explaining the concept (e.g, a YouTube video or other print resource), show that to the learner as well.
4. **Model how to solve a sample question**. (“I’m going to show you how I would tackle this type of question.”) **Think aloud to demonstrate reading strategies**. You might say things like this:
   * I’m going to scan the answers so that I know what I should be looking for while I read. [Read the answers.] Now I know I need to figure out if the author’s purpose is to entertain, to inform, to persuade, or to compel the reader to action.
   * [Start reading the passage aloud. Pause to comment.] Now I know that the author is writing about voting. He’s worried about fraud. He seems pretty angry. I think I can rule out that he is trying to entertain me.
   * I’m not sure what this word means, but I’m going to keep reading for now; I’ll come back to it if I need to.
   * I’m going to re-read this paragraph because I feel lost.
   * OK, so the bottom line seems to be that the author is worried about voter fraud, so he thinks that ID rules should be more strict. He’s definitely opinionated, so I don’t think he’s just informing me. He wants to convince me that he’s right. He doesn’t suggest anything I should do about it, so I don’t think he’s trying to compel me to action. So I think the best answer is C – to persuade.
5. Give the learner some **practice questions** to attempt while you **observe, prompt and guide**. Encourage the learner to think aloud.
6. Give the learner some **practice questions to attempt independently** (during the session or for homework.)
7. If needed, provide **more opportunities for practice.**
   * Incorporate *doing*. For example, if a learner is struggling with reading charts, graphs, or maps, have him create one. If he’s having trouble interpreting political cartoons, have him draw an original one. If he struggles to visualize a math concept, bring in a tape measure, measuring cups, scale, coins, legos, etc., for hands-on practice.
   * If the learner is answering about 75% of GED-level questions correctly, then he/she has probably mastered the skill/topic sufficiently.
     + Is the learner’s goal just to pass with a 145 or better? Or to prepare for college level work, earning placement into certain college courses (165+) or perhaps even earning college credit at certain institutions (175+)?
     + If the goal is just to pass, then it’s not necessary to master the most rigorous material. For example, a learner can pass math by mastering basic math (including ratios in various forms), fundamentals of algebra and geometry, and fundamentals of graphing and functions. Passing does NOT require mastery of the quadratic formula, trigonometry, etc. Those skills would be required to score at the highest levels but not to pass.
   * If the skill is too difficult for the learner, provide more practice at a pre-GED level. (See staff for assistance finding resources as needed). It’s also OK to table the topic, move on, and circle back later.
8. When possible, wrap up with an opportunity to **apply the skill using real-world materials,** preferably on a high interest topic. Sources might be a current newspaper article, editorial, consumer information, health study, sports stats, etc.
9. As appropriate, allow time each session for **supplemental instruction on a high need or high interest topic**. For example, you might drill math facts, practice with the GED calculator, practice computer skills, do vocabulary or spelling activities, discuss the next section of a novel you’re reading together, review one grammar topic, etc – or work on a secondary goal such as studying for the driver’s test or writing a resume.
10. **Review the day’s lesson and discuss a plan for the next lesson**: Does the learner feel ready to move on to the next chapter in the core text? Or does the learner need more practice with the current topic?

*NOTE: GED candidates should always take the GED Ready practice test before attempting the real thing. We recommend a minimum score of 150 before attempting the actual GED test.*