



## GRE Literature in English (GRE Test Preparation)

By James S. Malek Ph.D., Thomas C. Kennedy Ph.D., Pauline Beard Ph.D., Robert Liftig Ph.D., Bernadette Brick, GRE, English Literature Study Guides

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Our detailed explanations of answers help you identify your strengths and weaknesses. We don't just say which answers are right – we also explain why the

other answer choices are incorrect – so you'll be prepared on test day!

**REA's exclusive Pro Study Plan helps you maximize your valuable study time** while learning effective test-taking strategies and timesaving tips from the pros. As an added bonus, up-to-the-minute GRE test information and updates are available at: [www.rea.com/GRE](http://www.rea.com/GRE)

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**Ph.D., Pauline Beard Ph.D., Robert Liftig Ph.D., Bernadette Brick, GRE, English Literature Study Guides Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

From the Back Cover

### **EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO SUCCEED ON THE GRE LITERATURE IN ENGLISH TEST!**

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#### **ORGANIZE YOUR TIME**

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Each GRE Literature in English practice test comes with detailed feedback on every question. We don't just say which answers are right – but explain why the others are wrong, so you'll be prepared for the GRE Literature in English exam.

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**Introduction**

**ABOUT THE TEST**

The GRE Literature in English Test is taken by students applying to graduate programs in English. Most programs require that applicants submit scores for both the GRE General Test and the GRE Literature in English Test. Both tests are offered by ETS (Educational Testing Service) and administered at test locations throughout the country and abroad. You can obtain a test registration booklet from your college or by contacting ETS directly.

The test is usually administered 3 times a year and contains approximately 230 questions, which you have two hours and fifty minutes to answer. Unlike the General Test, the Literature in English Test is not divided into sections, so you can answer the questions in any order. However, keep in mind that there are no breaks in this examination. Each of the 230 questions is worth the same amount, one point. Also unlike the General Test, there is a penalty for wrong answers which serves to correct for “guessing.” For each wrong answer, one-quarter of a point is deducted from your score. Unanswered questions are not counted either way.

**Questions on the GRE Literature in English can be loosely categorized into two types:**

**Critical** – These questions test your ability to distinguish aspects of literature such as voice, tone, mood, theme, form, structure and literary methods from a given literature passage (usually an excerpt from a larger work or a short poem).

**Factual** – These questions are a straightforward testing of specific facts. You are asked to recall and recognize information regarding authors and literary works (often based on brief passages written by or about the authors); substance and styles of writing; historical and biographical information; and details such as plot, character, and setting.

When you register for the test, you will receive a booklet about the types of questions you will be asked to answer. These question types are as follows:

- Literary Analysis (40-55%)
- Identification (15-20%)
- Cultural and Historical Contexts (20-25%)

- History and Theory of Literary Criticism (10-15%)

These questions test the following literatures:

- Continental, Classical, and Comparative Literature through 1925 (5-10%)
- British Literature to 1660 (including Milton) (25-30%)
- British Literature from 1660-1925 (25-35%)
- American Literature through 1925 (15-25%)
- American, British, and World Literatures after 1925 (20-30%)

You should keep in mind, however, that ETS's classification of questions may not be the same as your own. Therefore, we suggest you focus primarily on knowing how to answer ID questions. Refresh your memory of the big names in literature, their better known works, and the time periods they come from.

You should also study the review and practice tests in this book, which cover the material that most often appears on administrations of the GRE Literature in English Test, and study actual past administrations of the test published by ETS.

### **HOW TO STUDY FOR THE TEST**

Use the review at the beginning of this book to refresh your knowledge of the subject matter. This review covers authors and works most often seen on the GRE Literature in English Test. However, not everything covered in the review will be on every administration of the test and not everything on the test will be a part of any review.

If you are unfamiliar with any authors, works, or terms covered in the review, you should be sure to look them up in reference books such as the *Norton Anthology of English Literature* or *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*. If you have time, you should also consult the works themselves. This is especially important for an author like Chaucer. Although our review and the above reference books can give you summaries of the most important of *The Canterbury Tales*, only by actually reading a few of the tales will you be able to recognize Middle English and Chaucer's distinctive style when you must identify a line on the test.

After studying REA's review and additional reference materials, take the practice tests in this book. When you take our GRE Literature in English practice tests, be sure to simulate testing conditions: sit at a table in a quiet room free of distractions and time yourself. Doing this will make you less nervous the day of the actual test and, more importantly, you will develop a sense of pacing. After timing yourself for all of the practice tests, you will have a very good idea of how much time you can spend on each question during the actual test.

Be sure to check over your practice tests. Look up any questions you got wrong in the explanations. Use reference books and the works themselves for further review. Only by studying what you miss will you be able to get it right on the actual GRE.

### **TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES**

Although you will probably have to take both the General and the Subject Test, try to avoid taking them on the same day. Taking any test is stressful, and after sitting for one extremely long standardized test, you will hardly be at your best for the second exam. Be sure to register for testing dates several months before the due date to ensure that the graduate schools you designated will receive your scores by the application deadlines. Most schools will not consider an incomplete application.

Because the test is not divided into sections, you are completely responsible for budgeting your own time. All of the questions are worth the same amount of points, so you should not spend too much time on any one question. The GRE Literature in English Test attempts to cover a broad range of authors and works. It is unlikely that you will have read all of the works ETS includes, or even most of them; therefore, some questions will be substantially easier for you than others. It is important that you do not spend too much time on questions you find difficult at the expense of working on questions that are easier for you.

The time constraints are such that, on average, a little over a minute is allotted for each question. Thus, it is unlikely that you will have time to answer all 230 questions; however, you can still receive an excellent score without answering all of them. Because the questions are in no particular order, we recommend making a complete pass through all the questions on the test. Answer the ones that are immediately easy for you and mark ones that you want to come back to. Once you have answered all of the easier questions, you can use the remaining time to go back through the test a second time and work on the harder questions that require a greater amount of your time. In this way you ensure that you have the chance to answer all the questions you are likely to get correct, instead of spending time on difficult questions near the beginning of the test and leaving easy questions at the end of the test unanswered.

The penalty for wrong answers should not deter you completely from guessing. If you have no clue what the answer might be, by all means leave the question unanswered. However, if you can eliminate one or two of the five choices, it is to your advantage to make an educated guess. Statistically, guessing randomly among the five choices would give you the possibility of guessing correctly 1/5 of the time. (This is what the 1/4 point deduction for wrong answers is designed to balance.) Being able to eliminate three of the choices as wrong answers means that guessing between the two remaining choices would give you a better chance of being correct.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Alfred Hoover:**

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**Lynn Gowen:**

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**Florence Ross:**

People live in this new day of lifestyle always try to and must have the spare time or they will get lot of stress from both everyday life and work. So , once we ask do people have free time, we will say absolutely sure. People is human not only a robot. Then we consult again, what kind of activity do you possess when the spare time coming to you actually of course your answer may unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative throughout spending your spare time, the actual book you have read is usually GRE Literature in English (GRE Test Preparation).

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