

Top tips for writing extended responses



Just because students attempt written responses on the RLA and Social Studies test subjects doesn't mean they'll earn points for them. First, their responses need to meet the minimum scoring criteria, which you can find in the [Extended Response Resource Guide for Educators](#). Second, **make sure students follow these basic but important rules so they'll earn points for their responses on test day:**

1. **Write a complete essay** — at least 4-7 paragraphs or 300-500 words
2. **Give commentary on quotes from source text** — rather than use lots of quotes, it's better to paraphrase evidence and explain why the evidence supports the students' assertion regarding which position is stronger. Most of the response should be written in the student's own words.
3. **Develop 2-3 main ideas** — focus on fully-developing a few main ideas with supporting evidence
4. **Proofread** — spend the last 4-5 minutes checking for grammar issues. Focus on:

- varied sentence structure
- avoidance of wordiness/awkward and run-on sentences
- use of transition words
- correct use of homonyms and contractions
- subject-verb agreement
- pronoun usage
- appropriate word order
- capitalization
- punctuation
- use of apostrophes

For more tips to help your students write high-scoring written responses, [download the 2014 GED® Program Educator Handbook](#).