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Preparing for the GED Exams

Preparation is the key to success on the GED!

Some useful suggestions:

- Before applying to write the exams, borrow a GED study guide from your local library. Do not purchase a copy until you know how much practice you need.
- If you need more than two weeks of review, you should purchase a GED guide of your own. We recommend the Steck-Vaughn Canadian Complete Canadian GED Preparation guide. It is available at most bookstores, including ours (room A026).
- The GED tests evaluate skills, NOT content. The critical skill in all the tests is reading comprehension. You need not memorize the material in the reading, science, and social studies sections. There are no questions that require mastery of content knowledge. Memorizing will not help you. The test is designed to determine your academic skills – writing, independent reading comprehension, and problem solving. Some basic knowledge of concepts (ex-democracy) will be useful, but focusing unnecessarily on details will only waste your time and effort on material you will not need for the test.

If you plan to write the GED exams in the near future, consider this plan to prepare for it:

1) Check the table of contents of your GED study guide (borrowed or purchased) and find the tests in the study guide

- Some books have tests at the beginning and at the end of the book (pre-tests to be done before you begin your review and post-tests to determine how much progress you've made).
- Some study guides may have tests at the end of each chapter.

2) Check your current skills in all subject areas

- Do a writing, reading, science, social, and math test.
- Correct your work (the answer keys may be at the end of the book or at the end of the chapter – refer to the table of contents).
- If your mark on any test is around 70% or higher, you should be ready for that subject with minimal review. Continue to work with the study guide.
- If your mark on any test is around 60%, you should be ready for that subject with several weeks of review. Continue to work with the study guide.
- If your mark on any test is around 50%, you may need more than one month of review. If you experienced difficulty in school, a GED Prep class might also be useful.

- If your mark is 40% or less, you will either need extensive review or a GED Prep class. NorQuest College offers a GED Prep class in the evening. Contact the registrar's office at 780-644-6000 for details.

3) Review

- Plan to work at least one hour each day. If you need more review, you may need to study for two or three hours each day.
- Read any information (hints) about test-taking skills provided in the study guide – usually at the front of the book.
- When you complete any exercise, check your work. Most study guides will not only give the correct answer, but also an explanation why it is the correct answer (the Steck-Vaughn edition also briefly explains why the incorrect answers are wrong). If you chose the wrong answer, read that explanation carefully and go back to the text to figure out what you misunderstood.
- When you think you have done enough exercises in any one subject, do the corresponding practice test in the book. If you have studied effectively, this score should be higher than the first score.
- If you have not improved, you require more practice in that subject.

If you follow this plan, you probably won't need to work through an entire study guide.

4) Apply to write the GED exams

- If your score on all practice tests is at least 60%, you should be able to succeed on the official GED. Complete and submit the attached application form, along with your payment.
- If most of your scores are low, you have 2 options:
 - Plan to review for several months; apply for GED testing when your skills have improved.
 - Consider taking a GED Prep course and writing the GED exams at the end of the course.