

**GWAR PLACEMENT EXAMINATION
(GPE)**

WORKSHOP MATERIALS

TESTING DEPARTMENT

**GWAR PLACEMENT EXAMINATION
(GPE)**

GPE SCORING GUIDE

GPE Scoring Rubric September 2016

- 6 A 6 essay:**
- Presents a clearly stated, logically organized, well-developed response to all parts of the prompt that reflects originality and complexity of thought
 - Contains compelling examples or arguments to support the major points
 - Contains information from one or more of the informational sources in the prompt (e.g., text, picture, chart)
 - Uses complex vocabulary and sentence structure appropriate for upper-division university writing
 - Has very few errors typical of a first draft; is free of errors that interfere with meaning
- 5 A 5 essay:**
- Presents a clearly stated, logically organized, and well-developed response to all parts of the prompt, although it may address some parts of the prompt more effectively than others
 - Contains relevant and persuasive examples or arguments to support most of the major points
 - Contains information from one or more of the informational sources in the prompt (e.g., text, picture, chart)
 - Uses effective vocabulary and sentence structure appropriate for upper-division university writing, but may have occasional lapses
 - Has occasional errors typical of a first draft, but is free of errors that interfere with meaning
- 4 A 4 essay:**
- Presents a coherent and sufficient response to the prompt that may have occasional flaws in organization or may slight some parts of the prompt
 - Contains relevant but predictable examples or arguments to support some of the major points
 - Contains information from one of the informational sources in the prompt (e.g., text, picture, chart)
 - Uses vocabulary correctly and employs sentence structures that are generally acceptable for upper division university-level writing, but with occasional lapses
 - Has errors typical of a first draft; may have a few errors that interfere with meaning
-
- 3 A 3 essay:**
- Presents flawed organization or inadequate development in response to parts of the prompt
 - Contains inappropriate or insufficient examples or arguments to support the major points
 - May not contain information from one of the informational sources in the prompt (e.g., text, picture, chart)
 - Often uses inappropriate vocabulary or faulty sentence structure that is at times unacceptable for upper division university-level writing
 - Contains many errors, including some errors that interfere with meaning
- 2 A 2 essay:**
- Presents a disorganized and underdeveloped response to the prompt
 - Contains irrelevant examples and arguments or little or no detail to support the major points
 - Does not contain information from one of the informational sources in the prompt (e.g., text, picture, chart)
 - Consistently uses inappropriate vocabulary and sentence structure unacceptable for university writing
 - Contains numerous errors that frequently interfere with meaning
- 1 A 1 essay:**
- Presents an incoherent and undeveloped response to the prompt
 - Contains no examples or arguments
 - Does not contain information from one of the informational sources in the prompt (e.g., text, picture, chart)
 - Has severe and persistent errors in vocabulary and sentence structure
 - Contains an accumulation of errors that obscure meaning

**GWAR PLACEMENT EXAMINATION
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**SAMPLE ESSAY TOPIC
AND
SAMPLE ESSAYS**

**SAMPLE GPE TOPIC
ESSAY'S A, B, C, & D
THE CSULB GEAR Placement Examination (GPE)**

You will have a total of 75 minutes to respond to the topic below. A time warning will be announced 10 minutes before the end of the test.

You will not be allowed to leave early.

DIRECTIONS: Write a clear and well-organized essay in response to the topic below. Be sure to respond to all parts of the topic. Provide examples and evidence to support your ideas.

DO NOT WRITE ON A TOPIC OTHER THAN THE ONE ASSIGNED BELOW

QUESTION

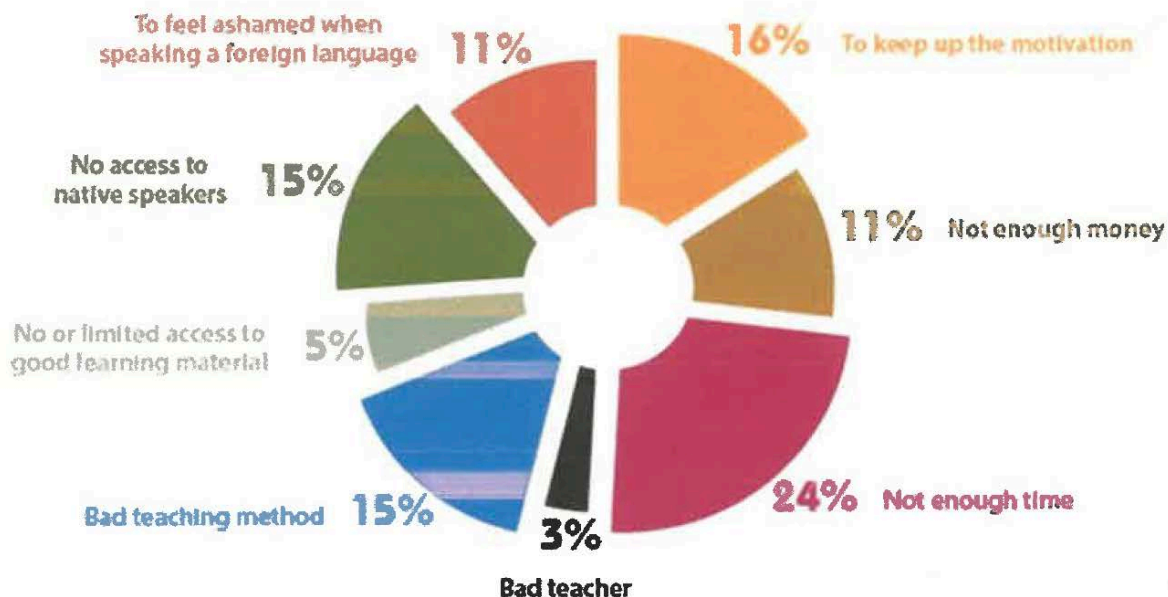
Using information from at least one of the informational sources below (texts, charts, and/or pictures), as well as your own personal experience, explain what you think can be done to improve foreign language learning outcomes for people who begin learning a foreign language in their teenage years or in adulthood.

Text

Learning to speak a foreign language is very difficult for people who begin learning the language as teenagers or adults. It is estimated that only 5-10% of late language learners (people who begin learning a foreign language in their teenage years or adulthood) achieve true mastery of that language. In addition, many people give up. One website estimated that between 50 to 90% of all foreign language learners eventually quit trying to improve their foreign language skills.

Picture

Main difficulty experienced when learning a new language



SAMPLE ESSAY A

Being bilingual or multilingual is an asset in today's society. Individuals who can speak more than one language are at an advantage when it comes to hiring decisions, academic success, and even personal enrichment. However, unless you grow up in a family that speaks multiple languages, learning a non-native language can be a tremendously difficult feat to accomplish, especially for older individuals.

Why is this the case? The information provided in the prompt lists various reasons, including problems with the current educational system, affective factors, and a lack of time and money. Interestingly, the pie chart indicates that "not enough time" (at 24%) is the most common reason why 50 to 90% of all late language learners eventually call it quits with their foreign language.

The lack of time is a serious problem. Learning a foreign language for adults typically takes many years. This is partly because adults are not hardwired to learn languages well, in contrast to children. Children learn languages quickly and easily. For example, they pick up the grammar rules of their native language by the age of 5, and they can learn new words with remarkably little effort. Adults, in contrast, have to spend many hours, days and even years to reach the same level of mastery that children do in a few years.

Since adults cannot change how they are hardwired, what can they do to address the time issue, as well as the other issues mentioned in the prompt? Regarding the time issue, persistence is most likely the best solution. Adults need to keep in mind the old adage "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," and if small steps are taken every day, they will make progress—maybe not to complete mastery, but good enough to use the language productively.

What about the other issues identified in the question, such as the problems with the educational approach (teachers, materials) and the affective factors (shame and demotivation)? There are no simple solutions to these issues, but if adults are faced with inadequate or ineffective classes, they can find opportunities to use and hear the language outside of the classroom (for example, watching movies in the foreign language or joining a language club to practice). If adults find themselves burdened by shame or a lack of motivation, they can perhaps keep in mind that "true mastery" is not a necessary goal. Have fun with the language and use it to meet new people and learn about new cultures. Having a perfect accent or perfect grammar is not needed to accomplish those.

SAMPLE ESSAY B

Learning a foreign language is a difficult thing to do, and according to the text provided, 90-95% of late learners quit trying to learn a foreign language. Some of the reasons given include feeling ashamed when speaking a foreign language, no access to native speakers, not having enough time, bad teaching methods and not enough motivation.

I think the most serious of these is the bad teaching method, which the graph says is the reason why 15% of all language learners eventually quit. Most junior high schools, high schools, and colleges use very outdated and boring methods to teach foreign languages. For example, you have to repeat after the teacher, memorize conversations in the textbook, and take boring multiple-choice tests. You don't really have conversations in class or learn useful things. If the teacher used more interesting methods, like bringing in native speakers as guest speakers, showing movies or tv shows in the foreign language in class, or using drama to teach the language, students would find the classes more interesting and motivating.

This brings me to the second biggest reason language learners quit: lack of motivation (16%). It's difficult to stay motivated when learning a foreign language. It's slow and it's hard to see that you're making any progress. It's easy to think that "I'm not improving" and then give up. It can also be boring to study grammar. There are so many rules to remember and it can seem sometimes like it's impossible. To improve motivation, foreign language learners can set small, achievable goals for themselves, like "today I will learn how to start a conversation in the foreign language," or "today I will learn 10 new words."

The biggest reason, however, is that teenagers and adults don't have enough time (24%). Children only take a few years to learn a language and they don't put much effort into it. Teenagers and adults though can take decades to learn a language. This is because there are changes in the brain that make learning basic skills difficult to do. It is difficult to find a solution for this, because most teenagers and adults have jobs and many responsibilities. One suggestion is to keep in mind that total mastery is not necessary for most people: it is enough just to be conversant in another language. Keep the goals realistic and small can reduce the amount of time that people need.

SAMPLE ESSAY C

Why is it so difficult to learn a foreign language? Many people have said why it is so difficult. In this essay, I will present my opinion on why learning a foreign language is so difficult.

The first reason is that there is too much new vocabularies to learn. In my English studies, I had to memorize many words. In my classes I had to take a lot of tests to show I know the vocabularies. It took a lot of time for learning all the new words.

The second reason is the testing system. In my classes the test is just about grammar and vocabulary. There is no pronunciation or conversation. I can explain a lot about the language but it's hard to speak the language.

The third reason is that my major studies are more important. I have many classes with a lot of homework, but they are in my major. If I do well with my major classes this is more important for future job search than the foreign language.

To conclude my point, there are many reason why to learn a foreign language is hard. I think the good solution is to not learn a foreign language because my major studies are more important.

SAMPLE ESSAY D

Learning to speak a foreign language is very difficult for people who begin learning the language as teenagers or adults. The cause are "to feel ashamed when speaking a foreign language", "to keep up the motivation", "not enough money", "not enough money", "bad teacher", "bad teaching method", "no or limited access to good learning material", "no access to native speakers".

Its important to learn another language for vary reasons. If you visit a foreign country, you should know the language there so you can order food, ride taxi, get hotel, and etc. If you don't know a foreign language when you visit a foreign country you can't to do this things. You can also impress upon the local people.

Another reason people should learn a foreign language is people can make new friends and meeting interesting people. It is becoming really common to find social network sites like facebook where you can interact among other people coming from all over the world. The best way to learn other culture and new people is talking with them, and you must have foreign languages knowledge to do this.

There are many sites to learn foreign languages. The best one is italki. This is the answer to problems listed in beginning because of it's price, efficiency, reliability, easy of use, and use of technology.

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**SCORED SAMPLE ESSAYS
SCORING GUIDE**

Scored Sample Essays

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PRACTICE ESSAY

PRACTICE GPE PROMPT

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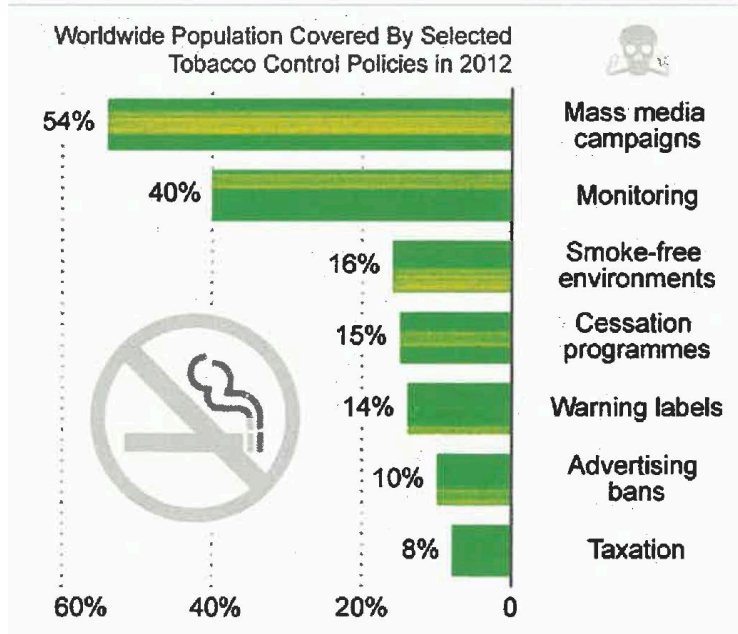
QUESTION

Using information from at least one of the informational sources below (texts, charts, and/or pictures), as well as your own personal experience, explain whether you think universities should completely ban smoking, vaping and tobacco use from campuses.

Text

CSULB recently launched the “Breathe” campaign, which completely bans smoking, vaping (electronic cigarettes), and other tobacco use from its campus. Some individuals disagree with complete bans such as these, saying, for example, that they violate individual freedoms and that other, less drastic measures could be taken. Other individuals, however, have argued that complete public bans are needed.

Picture 1



Picture 2

SMOKING RISK IN THE UNITED STATES

Over 10 million youth aged 12-17 in the United States are either open to trying smoking or are already experimenting with cigarettes

Almost 600 of these youth will become daily cigarette smokers

Every day in the U.S., over 2,600 children under age 18 smoke their first cigarette

As of 2014, 77 countries and territories require picture warnings on cigarette packages

SOURCE: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

KELSIE TRAVERS THE DAILY ILLINI