

# GED Four Point Essay Scoring

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Marginal</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Effective</b>
	<b>Reader has difficulty identifying or following the writer's ideas.</b>	<b>Reader occasionally has difficulty understanding or following the writer's ideas.</b>	<b>Reader understands writer's ideas.</b>	<b>Reader understands and easily follows the writer's expression of ideas.</b>
<b>Response to the Prompt</b>	Attempts to address prompt but with little or no success in establishing focus	Addresses the prompt, though the focus may shift.	Uses the writing prompt to establish a main idea.	Presents a clearly focused main idea that addresses the prompt.
<b>Organization</b>	Fails to organize ideas	Shows some evidence of an organizational plan.	Uses an identifiable organizational plan.	Establishes a clear and logical organization
<b>Development and Details</b>	Demonstrates little or no development; usually lacks details or examples or presents irrelevant information.	Has some development but lacks specific details; may be limited to a listing, repetitions, or generalizations.	Has focused but occasionally uneven development; incorporates some specific detail.	Achieves coherent development with specific and relevant details and examples.
<b>Conventions of EAE</b>	May exhibit minimal or no control of sentence structure and the conventions of EAE.	May demonstrate inconsistent control of sentence structure and the conventions of EAE.	Generally controls sentence structure and the conventions of EAE.	Consistently controls sentence structure and the conventions of Edited American English.
<b>Word Choice</b>	Exhibits weak and/or inappropriate words.	Exhibits a narrow range of word choice, often including inappropriate selections.	Exhibits appropriate word choice.	Exhibits varied and precise word choice.

*Topic: If you could make one positive change in your life, what would that change be?*

### Score Point 1 – Inadequate

If I could make one positive change to my daily life. I guess I would make it so that I don't have any bad days, because when I have a bad day I get grouchy and I am not as patient and caring a human being as I am normally. If I didn't have bad days I would be the most wonderful caring human being.

- The writer **attempts to address the prompt** by stating that the positive change would involve not having any “bad days.” Although the writer defines a bad day as one when “I get grouchy,” **the reader still has difficulty identifying what the writer means by a “bad day.”** The essay suggests that “bad days” change the writer’s character from “patient and caring” to “grouchy.”
- The response conveys **no plan for further development** such as definition of bad days, examples of attitude change, and some ways to avoid bad days. The writer could discuss how avoiding bad days would allow this person to be the “most wonderful caring human being.”
- Lacking a plan for development, the writer fails to develop those possible organizational points by specific details and examples.
- The first sentence is a fragment. The writer could have used a comma in place of the period and made a connection between the “positive change” and not having a “bad day.” The construction of the paragraph reveals **a lack of control of the sentences**, especially the first two awkwardly phrased sentences (a fragment and a run-on).
- Although the writer attempts to address the prompt, the lack of organization and development make the reader’s job of identifying and following the ideas difficult.

### Score Point 2 – Marginal

If I could make one positive change to my daily life, I would try to have a positive attitude every day. A positive attitude would help me deal with days when I am having difficulty and act more positively.

There are days when nothing goes right. I also have days when bad attitudes from others make me grouchy. I hate when unexpected things make my day miserable.

I need to be more positive on these days. You need to make the best of miserable situations and be more positive. Putting on a smile, ignoring grumpy people, to find the good in everything.

I can make my life more positive.

- The first paragraph offers a **response to the prompt**: “...to have a positive attitude every day.” According to the writer this positive attitude will help the person “deal with days when I am having difficulty...”

- The second and third paragraphs are the **organizational plan**; however, the points of the paragraphs are **lists or generalizations** that the writer fails to develop by details, examples, or elaboration. The word “positive” is used repetitively.
- The writer **controls the sentence structure** and mechanics in the first paragraph, but **loses the control** and shifts the point of view from I to you in the third paragraph. The last sentence of the paragraph is a fragment.
- **Occasionally the reader has difficulty understanding or following the writer’s ideas.** Because the writer does not provide the necessary development, the reader must imagine how the writer will adopt this organizational plan, take the necessary steps, and achieve a positive change.

### Score Point 3 – Adequate

If I could make one positive change to my daily life, I would try to have a positive attitude on days when I’m having a difficult time. Usually, I’m a pretty even-tempered person, but there are days when nothing seems to go right or some unexpected event disrupts my routine. In those situations, I need to control myself so that I don’t react in a grouchy manner.

There always seem to be times when no matter how much I want things to go well I keep screwing up. In the mornings when I need to leave for work by 8, I find myself looking for something I’ve misplaced. Sometimes accidents happen such as the power going off and my alarm doesn’t go off and my well pump won’t work. These little things get my day off to a bad start. The later I am getting out of the house, the madder I get. When I get to work I take my anger out on my coworker and customers.

I can take charge of my problems and not let them control me. I can accept that there are some things I can’t control and just learn to work through them. Although I might be miserable, I can force myself to smile so that I don’t depress others. A smile goes a long way. Also, I can ignore when others are mean to me. This way I won’t let their negative attitudes bring me down.

There will be days that don’t always go as smoothly as I’d like, but I have the power to keep myself thinking positively. This attitude will benefit my daily life.

- The first paragraph is similar to the first paragraph for the 2-score; however, the 3-score paragraph conveys the **response, focus, and organizational plan** more clearly. The writer is normally a pleasant person unless the daily routine is broken. The essay states that if the writer can “control myself,” then the “even-tempered” personality, not the “grouchy” one will present a “positive attitude.” This revision helps the reader to understand the response to the prompt and the writer’s focus and organizational plan.
- The second paragraph states the generalization from the 2-score about “days when nothing goes right” and **specifies** what those days are like. The writer **focuses on some specific times** that prevent the writer from leaving for work on time: can’t

find things, power goes out, and the well pump won't work. The writer makes the connection that it's these "little things" that bring on the "grouchy manner." The last sentence develops the point by telling how the negative attitude is unleashed on innocent co-workers and customers. The **details** in this paragraph **support the focus** stated in the first paragraph.

- The third paragraph **explains** the steps the writer plans to take to maintain a positive attitude in difficult times. The writer acknowledges that there are some things that can't be controlled; therefore, she adopts a positive approach of working "through the (problems)." The writer states two ways to do this: smiling and ignoring mean people.
- Although both the second and third paragraphs offer some specific details for making the change, some points need additional development:
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph—explain how the accidents frustrate the writer and makes him "madder"
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph—suggest some ways to work through problems by explaining how smiling and ignoring mean people will be positive.
- **In general the writer controls the sentence structure and conventions of EAE** with some lapses such as the conversational language ("pretty," "screwing up," and "madder"), the run-on sentence (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph), and the comma omitted after "When I get to work" (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph). However, these lapses do not keep the reader from understanding the writer's ideas in this adequate essay.

#### **Score Point 4 – Effective**

"Tough times don't last, but tough people do." I remember hearing that sentence once, and it suggested a way in which I could make a positive change in my daily life. Usually, I am an even-tempered person, but there are times when my balance is tested. Like most people, I have days when nothing seems to go right or some unexpected event upsets my daily routine. In those situations, I often lose my self-control and unfairly inflict my frustration on others. I need to change how I handle myself in these disruptive situations.

Despite the best intentions, there will be times when order will be temporarily disturbed. Instead of letting the situation rule me, I need to act positively. For examples, I need to leave my house for work by 8 a.m. each work day. However, there have been some days when my car keys have been misplaced, papers for work have disappeared, or my clothes just don't look right. The search or clothing change delays my departure and has me arriving at work late. There have also been those mornings following a strong storm when the power went out while I slept. As a result, my alarm clock failed to wake me in time. On some mornings with the power out, my well pump doesn't operate, and I go without my morning shower that wakes me and keeps me clean for my day at work. In the past, my frustration carried over to my co-workers and customers. A remark from a fellow worker was misunderstood or slight irritants were exaggerated. The problems were not with my associates but with me.

I need to be more active if I am to maintain my composure in trying situations. First, I need to accept the fact that there are many things over which I have no control. No matter how much I complain, argue, or plead I will not be able to change them. Therefore, I have to learn to “count to 10,” take a deep breath, and move on with my day. When I get to work, I need to project a calm, self-assured appearance as I greet my fellow employees. I’ve been told that a smile can disarm most opponents; it also projects an optimistic outlook that is contagious. This tactic can also be used to win over angry customers by putting them at ease and letting them know I’ll work to solve their problems.

It won’t be easy to be upbeat all the time, but if I try to control my responses to difficulties with self-control, I will keep myself and others in a positive atmosphere.

- From the opening quotation of the first paragraph, the writer of this essay makes a **clearly focused response to the prompt**. The writer connects the quotation to the positive change of handling “myself in these disruptive situations.” The paragraph prepares the reader for the development that will follow by establishing the **organizational plan**: to discuss difficult times that tested the writer’s self-control and the impact of losing that self-control.
- The second paragraph defines and **develops by citing examples** of situations that “upsets my daily routine.” The writer **provides examples** of those situations that prevent getting to work on time: “car keys have been misplaced, papers for work have disappeared, or my clothes don’t look right.” The **writer further develops this point by the examples** of daily routines impacted by storms: the alarm clock and shower that don’t work. The last sentence transitions the reader’s focus to the third paragraph.
- The third paragraph provides ways that the writer develops the last sentence of the first paragraph, “I need to change how I handle myself in these disruptive situations.” The writer provides several **specific examples** for exhibiting self-control: “...’count to 10’, take a deep breath, and move on with my day.” The last three sentences develop the impact of a smile in promoting an “optimistic (sic) outlook” and disarming angry customers.
- The **specific details and examples** provide support for the focus and organization in the first paragraph. Furthermore, the writer exhibits **control over the direction of the development**. The use of transitional words, phrases, and clauses provide coherence and a logical flow. The writer’s **sentence structure is effective in shaping the development**; there are varieties of sentence structures used throughout the response. A **variety of words are used** for the “positive attitude” used in 1- and 2-score papers: “balance, self-control, composure.”
- Even the misspelling of optimistic in the third paragraph does not prevent the reader from **understanding and easily following the writer’s expression of ideas** in this effective response.