

FTCE GKT: English Language Skills (ELS) Study Guide

Test Structure

- **Multiple-Choice Questions (40%)** – Grammar, sentence structure, and writing conventions.
- **Essay (60%)** – One written response (either **argumentative** or **expository**).

I. Multiple-Choice Section (Key Topics)

1. Grammar & Usage

- **Subject-Verb Agreement**
 - Singular subjects take singular verbs; plural subjects take plural verbs.
 - *Example:* "The **team is** ready" (correct) vs. "The **team are** ready" (incorrect).
- **Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement**
 - Pronouns must match their antecedents in number and gender.
 - *Example:* "Every student must bring **his or her** book" (not "their").
- **Verb Tense Consistency**
 - Maintain the same tense unless indicating a time shift.
 - *Example:* "She **walks** to school and **opens** her locker."
- **Modifiers & Parallel Structure**
 - Misplaced/Dangling Modifiers:
 - *Incorrect:* "Running down the street, the tree scared me."
 - *Correct:* "Running down the street, I was scared by the tree."
 - Parallelism:
 - *Incorrect:* "She likes hiking, swimming, and to ride bikes."
 - *Correct:* "She likes hiking, swimming, and riding bikes."

2. Sentence Structure & Syntax

- **Run-on Sentences & Fragments**
 - *Run-on:* "I love reading it is fun." → Fix with a period or conjunction.
 - *Fragment:* "Because I was tired." → Needs an independent clause.
- **Comma Usage**
 - Use after introductory phrases: "After the game, we celebrated."
 - Use in lists: "I bought apples, oranges, and bananas."
 - Do **not** use between two independent clauses without a conjunction (comma splice).
- **Apostrophes & Possessives**
 - Singular possessive: "The **student's** book."
 - Plural possessive: "The **students'** books."

3. Word Choice & Clarity

- **Commonly Confused Words**
 - *Their/There/They're, Your/You're, Its/It's, Affect/Effect*
- **Redundancy & Wordiness**
 - *Wordy:* "Due to the fact that" → *Better:* "Because"

II. Essay Section

Types of Essays

1. Argumentative Essay

- **Task:** Take a position on an issue and support it with evidence.
- **Structure:**
 - **Introduction** (hook, thesis statement)
 - **Body Paragraphs** (reasons + evidence)
 - **Counterargument & Rebuttal** (optional but strengthens the essay)
 - **Conclusion** (restate thesis, final thought)

2. Expository Essay

- **Task:** Explain or inform (no opinion needed).
- **Structure:**
 - **Introduction** (topic overview)
 - **Body Paragraphs** (facts, examples, clear explanations)
 - **Conclusion** (summary)

Essay Grading Criteria (Scored 0-6 by two raters; total 12)

- **Focus & Organization** (clear thesis, logical flow)
- **Support & Development** (evidence, examples)
- **Grammar & Mechanics** (proper sentence structure, spelling)

III. Study Tips & Resources

Multiple-Choice Prep

- Review **grammar rules** (Purdue OWL, Grammarly Guide).
- Practice **FTCE-style questions** (Official FTCE GKT English Practice Test).
- Take **timed quizzes** on Khan Academy or Quizlet.

Essay Prep

- **Practice Prompts:**
 - *Argumentative:* "Should school uniforms be mandatory?"
 - *Expository:* "Explain the benefits of renewable energy."
- **Time Management:**
 - **5 min** – Plan (outline thesis & key points).
 - **20 min** – Write.
 - **5 min** – Revise (check grammar, clarity).

Recommended Books & Websites

- **Books:**
 - *FTCE General Knowledge Test Prep* (Cirrus Test Prep)
 - *Barron's FTCE General Knowledge*
- **Websites:**
 - [FTCE Official Site](#) (for test blueprints)
 - [Khan Academy Grammar](#)

Final Advice

- Take **full-length practice tests** under timed conditions.
- Focus on **weak areas** (e.g., if grammar is tough, drill exercises daily).
- For the essay, **practice outlining quickly** before writing.