



Multiple Choice Tests

Multiple choice questions usually include a phrase or stem followed by three to five options.

TEST STRATEGIES:

- Read the directions carefully.
Know if each question has one or more correct option.
Know if you are penalized for guessing.
Know how much time is allowed (this governs your strategy).
- Preview the test.
Read through the test quickly and answer the easiest questions first.
Mark those you think you know in some way that is appropriate.
- Read through the test a second time and answer more difficult questions.
You may pick up cues for answers from the first reading, or become more comfortable in the testing situation.
- If time allows, review both questions and answers for it is possible you miss-read questions the first time

ANSWERING OPTIONS:

- **Improve your odds, think critically.**
- **Cover the options, read the stem, and try to answer.**
Select the option that most closely matches your answer.
- **Read the stem with each option.**
Treat each option as a true-false question, and choose the "most true".

Strategies to answer difficult questions:

- **Eliminate options you know to be incorrect.**
If allowed, mark words or alternatives in questions that

eliminate the option.

- **Give each option of a question the "true-false test"**
this may reduce your selection to the best answer.
- **Question options that grammatically don't fit with the stem.**
- **Question options that are totally unfamiliar to you.**
- **Question options that contain negative or absolute words.**

Try substituting a qualified term for the absolute one, like *frequently* for *always*; or *typical* for *every* to see if you can eliminate it.

- **All of the above**
If you know two of three options seem correct, "all of the above" is a strong possibility.
- **Number answers**
Toss out the high and low and consider the middle range numbers.
- **Look alike options**
Probably one is correct; choose the best but eliminate choices that mean basically the same thing, and thus cancel each other out.
- **Double negatives**
Create the equivalent positive statement and consider.
- **Echo options**
If two options are opposite each other, chances are one of them is correct.
- **Favor options that contain qualifiers**
The result is longer, more inclusive items that better fill the role of the answer.
- **If two alternatives seem correct,**
compare them for differences,
then refer to the stem to find your best answer.

Guessing:

- **Always guess when there is no penalty**
for guessing or you can eliminate options.
- **Don't guess if you are penalized for guessing**

and if you have no basis for your choice.

- **Use hints from questions you know**
to answer questions you do not.
- **Change your first answers**
when you are sure of the correction, or other cues in the
test cue you to change.

Remember that you are looking for the best answer

not only a correct one, and not one which must be true all of the
time, in all cases, and without exception.