

## MULTIPLE CHOICE



This is a popular form of testing for instructors, especially for larger class sizes. And unfortunately, they aren't always straight forward.

Keep in mind that when answering Multiple Choice questions, you are choosing the BEST answer or MOST TRUE answer. Choice A) and C) may both be correct, but one is truer than the other.

Here are a couple strategies when it comes to answering Multiple Choice questions.

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### **Read the Question Carefully**

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- Does the statement ask you to circle all the correct choices? Or only one?
- Don't lose easy marks because you didn't follow instructions

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### **You Answer First**

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- Read the question, then answer it in your head
- Do this before reading any of the choices
- Then, look for *your* answer in the list of choices

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### **Process of Elimination**

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- Search for the correct answer by eliminating the choices you know to be wrong
- Cross off these choices
- There is no sense being bogged down by choices you know to be incorrect
- And this is physical, which can keep you calm and more engaged
- Try to eliminate at least two choices, then you have a fifty-fifty chance of choosing the correct one
- Keep in mind:

- Is a choice correct in its own terms?
  - o If there's an error in the choice, an incorrect fact, or date or definition, the choice is wrong
- Is a choice relevant to the question?
  - o The choice itself could be correct, but is it related to what is being asked?
  - o If not, it's probably not your answer

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## Qualifiers

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- Knowledge isn't neatly black and white
- If a choice includes qualifying words (a word that increases or decreases the quality of the adjective or adverb it modifies), it is more likely that choice is correct
- *Probably, often, likely, sometimes, perhaps, may, rarely, can occasionally result in* – are often correct
- Strong qualifiers are often incorrect
- These are words like *never, always, none, all or every*
- EX: **All** students enjoy writing tests
  - o A truer statement would be: **Some** students enjoy writing tests
  - o It is incorrect to make sweeping generalizations

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## Negatives

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- There is likely to be a question with the dreaded "**not**" or "**cannot**" in it
- EX: Which one of the following is **not** part of...
- You don't want to miss the negative, as you'll answer the question incorrectly
- If the negative is throwing you off, try reading the question without it
- EX: Which of the following is ~~not~~ part of...
- Then, you can eliminate the choices that hold true for this statement
- And remember: two negatives = a positive (just like in math)
  
- EX: There's nothing less worse than not answering a question incorrectly
  - o Phew. This is wordy and confusing
  - o Break it down
  - o Less worse (two negatives) = better (a positive)
  - o Not & **in**correctly (two negatives) = correctly (a positive)

- The statement then becomes:
- There's nothing better than answering a question correctly

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## Long Passages

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- You may have a section of four (or so) questions related to a passage of text you must read
- Read the questions first before reading the text
- Having the question in your mind acts like a magnet for the information you're looking for
- And it will save you time as you won't need to read the text again for each question

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## Break. It. Down.

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- If a question is wordy and complicated, try and break it into sections that are easier to understand
- Underline keywords or phrases
- Or substitute words for less complicated versions of themselves
- Are you getting hung up on "malleable"? Try "soft"
- It is difficult to answer a question when you don't understand what is being asked of you

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## Still Stuck?

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- If you've narrowed down choices to A) or C)... go with C)
- If you've narrowed down choices to B) or D)... go with B)
- Instructors are more likely to put the correct choice in the middle, rather than as the first or last choice
  
- The following are more likely to be correct:
  - The longest choice, because it generally takes more words to make a choice truer
  - A choice that is more general (not as specific) than other choices
  
- Choices that agree grammatically with the statement

- EX: If the statement ends with “a” or “an”, it provides a clue as to which choice is the correct answer
  - o You wouldn’t say *a* alligator. You would say *an* alligator
- Look for choices with similar meaning
- EX:
  - o A) The car turned **right** at the stop sign
  - o B) The car turned **left** at the stop sign
- They are similar choices and one is more likely to be correct

Read all possible choices. And don’t hesitate to go back and change an answer. You may have found the answer in another test question. That’s okay. Make changes if you have a good reason to.

And never leave a question blank. You are not penalized for incorrect answers, so guess!

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