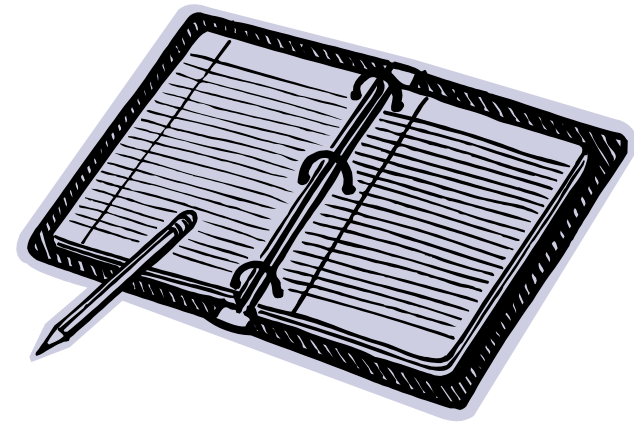


Evaluate	To determine or fix the value of through careful appraisal and study. To state the good and the bad. To give your personal opinion.
Examine	To inspect closely. To investigate. To look at all the pieces.
Explain	To take something that's difficult and put it in language that's more understandable. To give the reason for or cause of. To show the logical development of relationships. To tell specifics.
Identify	To know the personal or distinguishing characteristics of (e.g. to know someone well enough to pick him out of a lineup.)
Justify	To defend. To explain why something is so or why you believe something is so. Must present your specific reasons for feeling the way that you do.
List	To write items down in a numbered sequence. See <i>enumerate</i> .
Outline	To indicate the key features of different parts of (e.g. to outline your responsibilities). A condensed treatment of a particular subject using key words. A summary. A sketch.
Prove	To establish the truth or validity of by evidence or demonstration. See <i>justify</i> .
Review	To cover the main point succinctly. To condense a subject into a briefer form.
Select	See <i>choose</i> .
State	To express in words. Concentrate on main points rather than specific details.
Summarize	See <i>review</i> .
Trace	To set forth events step by step (e.g. to trace the history of the labor movement). Usually done in chronological order.

Test Taking Tips



INTRODUCTION

Every time you sit down to study for a test, get comfortable in the chair, take several deep breaths, and repeat out loud, RELAX, READ, REMEMBER, ten times over.

When you get to the examination room repeat these three steps, saying the words to yourself this time. Then read through the test from start to finish without writing anything. Go back to the beginning and answer the questions you are sure about. Go back to the beginning and answer all the questions you have omitted so far. It is said that answers you don't know at this time were not included in the work you studied; therefore it is up to you whether you guess or search your mind further for the answers.

THE THREE LEVELS OF COMPREHENSION *LITERAL, INTERPRETIVE, AND APPLICATIVE*

Often students study at one level of comprehension while the professor is testing for more advanced levels of comprehension. Students should learn to read at all three levels of comprehension so that they can match the way they study for with the types of questions that appear on them.

(Example questions below are taken from the fairy tale, *Little Red Riding Hood*.)

THE LITERAL LEVEL: At this level, the author states the facts—names, dates, locations, and definitions — clearly and directly. There is no hidden meaning; the reader can take what is presented at face value. On tests, literal questions usually come word-for-word from the text.

Ex. True or False. Red Riding met a wolf in the woods.

Words That Appear Most Frequently In Essay Exam Directions

Analyze	To dissect something or break it down into its different parts. To examine the relationship among the parts.
Choose	To select freely and after consideration. To state a preference for. You'll usually need to defend your choice—that is, you'll need to back your choice up with specific examples and personal opinions.
Compare	To examine the qualities of two things to discover the similarities between them.
Contrast	To examine the qualities of two things to discover the differences between them.
Criticize	To consider the merits and demerits of something and judge it accordingly. To evaluate. To give your judgment or opinion about something. When you criticize, you look at both the good and the bad. Constructive criticism means that you might make negative comments, but that you do so as feedback to help the other person improve or change his behavior. Criticism can be predominantly positive.
Define	To set forth the meaning of (as a word)
Describe	To write a detailed account or verbal picture. To tell everything you know about a subject (e.g., Describe a barn)
Diagram	To make a chart, graph, or drawing with labels to identify the key parts. May also need a written explanation of the parts.
Differentiate	To find the differences between two things. See <i>contrast</i> .
Discuss	To talk about. To tell everything you know about a subject. To investigate by reasoning or argument.
Enumerate	To specify one after another. To list.

Tips for Answering Essay/Discussion Questions

1. Become familiar with exam direction words, and do what the directions tell you to do.
2. Predict the questions most likely to be asked and practice answering them.
3. Plan before you answer. Make notes on the back of the exam sheet or in the margin. Outline your answer.
4. Check your outline against the question to be sure you are answering the question asked.
5. Do not write an introduction. Answer the question directly and forcefully in the first sentence.
6. Expand on the first sentence. Put down your ideas, facts, and details to support your first sentence.
7. Use transitions. Transitions are often called “directional words.” They point to the turn in the road that the reader should take.
8. Don’t save the best for last. If it is not included in your direct answer in the first few lines, your point may never become clear to the teacher.
9. End with a summarizing sentence or two.
10. Watch the time. If you think you may run out of time, just outline your remaining points to show the instructor that you did, in fact, have the necessary material in mind.

THE INTERPRETIVE LEVEL: To read at the interpretive level, you must first understand the facts at the literal level and then draw conclusions from those facts. This requires some independent thinking. On tests, interpretive questions usually present a piece of knowledge and then ask you to draw a conclusion or make an inference from it. You can’t pull the correct answer word-for-word from the text because it’s not there.

Ex: *What qualities of Little Red Riding Hood allowed the wolf to deceive her?*

THE APPLICATIVE LEVEL: At this level, the reader must take the information the author presents at the literal level and apply it to an entirely different situation. An applicative question on a test usually sets up a hypothetical situation and then asks what you’d do in that situation based on your newly found knowledge. You will usually find applicative questions on engineering, psychology, biology, and economics tests.

Ex: Discuss several ways in which the story, “Little Red Riding Hood,” might be used to teach children not to speak to strangers.

(adopted from [How to Survive at College](#) by Sara Jane Coffman)

TAKING OBJECTIVE TESTS

General Tips for Objective Tests

1. Follow instructions carefully.
2. Watch the time and pace yourself.
3. Answer items you are sure of first.
4. Read the whole question carefully.
5. To recall something “on the tip of your tongue,” think of associated facts.
6. Guess, unless the test is being scored to account for guessing.
7. Don’t change answers unless you are sure you have made a mistake.
8. Always check your answer sheet for careless errors.

General Guidelines for Guessing

A test-wise student can find clues to the correct answer. The following guidelines will help you guess at questions to which you do not know the answer.

Generally, the correct answer:

- will be longer than the incorrect answer
- will qualified to give it precision
- will not be the first or last option
- will not be one of the extremes of a set of options which can be put in some natural order (Ex: options which are numbers)
- will be one of two similar statements, or it will be one of two options which state the idea or fact diametrically opposite
- will be in a sentence bearing familiar or stereotyped phraseology
- will not contain language or technical terms which you are not expected to know
- will be a grammatically perfect extension of the question itself
- will not contain such extreme words as nonsense, foolhardy, harebrained, etc.
- will not be a flippant remark or a completely unreasonable statement.

(excerpted from Millman and Paulk, How to Take Tests. New York: Harcourt, 1978)

Tips for Answering True/False Questions

1. Watch for key words like *always*, *never*, *all*, or *none*. Qualified statements including words like these are probably false.
2. If any part of the statement is false, then the whole statement is false.
3. There are usually more true than false answers.
4. Most true statements come right out of a textbook or lecture.
5. Make yourself work quickly; don't pause to analyze.

Tips for Answering Multiple Choice Questions

1. Try to figure out the answer before you look at the choices.
2. Answer the items you are sure of first.
3. When you are uncertain of the correct choice, eliminate obviously incorrect items and make an "educated guess."
4. If a four choice item, (b) or (c) is more likely to be correct.
5. If a fifth choice appears on a selected number of questions, it is likely to be the correct answer.
6. Look closely at the longest answer. If it looks like a direct quotation, it is probably the correct answer.
7. If direct opposites appear as choices, one of them is likely to be correct.
8. Don't be fooled by technical terms you haven't heard before; they may be distractors.
9. Don't choose (a) without reading (b), (c), and (d).

Tips for Answering Matching Questions

1. Match the items you are sure of first. Then match the others by a process of elimination.
2. Read directions. Find out whether you are supposed to use each answer only once or any number of times.
3. If each phase can only be used once, confine your search to the matches you haven't used. In multiple use tests, give first priority to unused choices.
4. Find out which column has the longest phrases. Work your way down that column, which means you'll be rereading terms in the column with the shortest entries.

Tips for Answering Short Questions

1. Don't look too hard for hidden meaning. This type of question usually expects accurate recall of key words and phrases.
2. Watch the blanks to determine length of expected answers.
3. Over answer.