

# Module 2: Test Taking Strategies for the Content Test

Elementary (305)



# Test Questions



# How These Types of Tests are Written

## Test Writers:

- May not be educators
- May not know the field of Library Information Specialists
- Know how to write good distractors (wrong answers) - this is MORE important to them than the right answer!

Consider that one of their goals is to try to write wrong answers that sound like they could be correct - they may be “tricking” you!

What are some ways you can think of that they might trick you?

**Tip:** Thinking like a test writer can help you identify the incorrect answers. We will explore some of their tricks in the strategies later in this Module.

# Distractors

- Distractors are the **WRONG** answers
- Identifying the distractors **FIRST** can help you find the RIGHT answer!
- Good distractors are written to make you think there is a possibility they might be correct - they “trick” you!

On this test there is usually -

ONE really good  
distractor that  
might trick you

TWO distractors  
that can be  
easily ruled out

ONLY ONE  
CORRECT  
ANSWER

**Tip** - **Think like a test writer!** On this test you will often find two answers you think might be correct. Try to figure out what might be wrong with one rather than which is right.



# Strategies



**REMEMBER: Your Goal**  
is to **Maximize** the number you can get  
correct

**Not to get them ALL correct**  
You only need to get enough correct to  
score 240

**100% is not the goal!**



# Strategy - Matching Question/Answer Concepts

**ALWAYS** identify the **CONCEPT** the question is asking about BEFORE reading the answer choices

- It may be explicitly stated
- It may be stated within a problem (you will need to determine the concept they are talking about)
- Prepositions and infinitives help with identifying the concepts

**THEN**, locate that specific concept in the answer choices!

- If the answer sounds good but doesn't address the specific concept, it is not the correct answer!
- Use "Matching" to eliminate incorrect answers and identify correct ones





# Strategy - Matching Question/Answer Concepts

## Use of the word “BEST”

The question will ask you to “Choose the answer that “best”...

- This signals to you that there may be more than one correct answer (and may be all four!)

Determining what is “BEST” -

- Depends on age/grade
- Depends on situation (usually the characteristics of the student or the desired outcome)
- Depends on what we know is “best” way to learn

**TIP** - Put all of the answer choices in an order from best to worst based on the age/grade and situation before deciding



# Strategy- Elimination

Eliminating **INCORRECT** answers **FIRST** makes locating the correct answer easier!

- Eliminate the ones that are clearly incorrect (it should be fairly easy to choose two that are incorrect)
- You can now focus on only 2 answer choices rather than all 4
- By eliminating 2, you now have a 50% chance of getting it correct by simply guessing!
- If you don't eliminate, you have only a 25% chance of getting it correct by guessing

**TIP** - If you do guess...make sure to flag the question and go back to it at the end



# Strategy- Elimination

Answers that should be eliminated:

- Answers that would be good for other ages/grades
- Answers that are right for the age but address a different concept
- Answers that would not result in appropriate learning
- Answers that support learning in an area not specified
- Answers that are too “loose” or too “structured”

**TIP** - All answers might sound good, but something in 3 of them makes them incorrect. Find what makes them incorrect rather than what makes them correct.





## Additional Strategies:

- Interpret questions by asking “what is the question really asking?”
- Use the process of elimination.
- Subvocalize while reading the test (this aids comprehension)
- Take the test—you learn by seeing the actual test

# Question 1

1. The Illinois Learning Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy include teaching students at the fourth-grade level how to use context, Greek and Latin roots, and reference materials to promote vocabulary acquisition. Which of the following statements best explains how these strategies contribute to students' overall reading development and will help them develop college and career readiness in vocabulary?

- A. Students need to develop a variety of independent word-learning strategies to deal with the volume of new words they will encounter in wide reading.
- B. Students need to develop an awareness of new words they may encounter in their reading so that they will be able to retain them effectively in the future.
- C. Students need to develop an ability to spell and properly pronounce words that they may need to apply in their future speaking and writing endeavors.
- D. Students need to develop knowledge of a range of discipline-specific words so that they are prepared to study a variety of fields or to pursue different careers.



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## Question 2

2. A first-grade teacher is working with a small group of emergent readers and would like to promote their ability to identify the final consonant sound in spoken words. Which of the following student activities would best promote achievement of this goal?

- A. writing all the words they know that end in the same final sound and reading the words aloud
- B. circling the last letter of each word on a list of grade-level words and saying the letter's name aloud
- C. saying aloud the words depicted on picture cards and sorting the cards by the last sound in each word
- D. reading a simple grade-level poem aloud and segmenting the onsets and rimes of the final word in each line



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## Question 3

3. Which of the following sets of words would be most appropriate to use for assessing third-grade students' ability to use structural analysis skills to decode words?

- A. closed, living, held
- B. contestant, logically, correlation
- C. bunnies, cities, animals
- D. unhappy, daytime, noiseless

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## Question 4

4. Students in a third grade class are using weather journals to collect and record temperature data for a variety of locations within Illinois, including Chicago. Students notice that in the fall and early winter average temperatures in Chicago are not as cold as those in the outlying cities. This geographic difference in temperature is best explained by:

- A. the seasonal effect of the polar jet stream in Illinois.
- B. the high specific heat capacity of the water of Lake Michigan.
- C. the increased exposure to solar energy associated with Chicago's latitudinal location.
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