

[Year]



e-GMAT LLC

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## [USAGE OF AS AND LIKE]

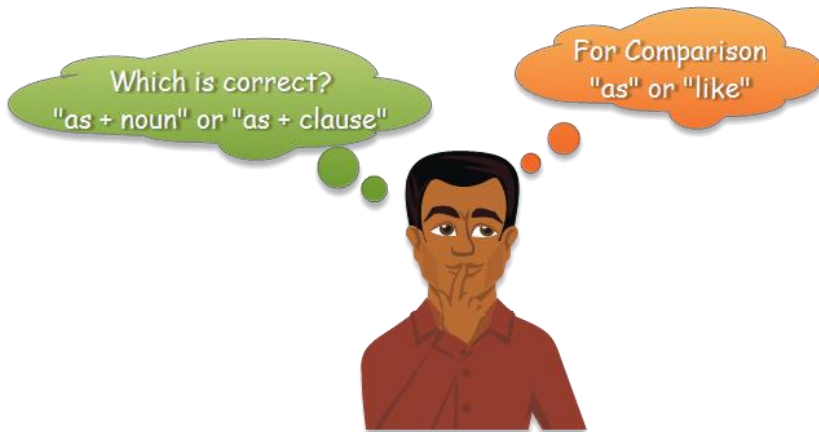
In this article we will first discuss why there is confusion with regards to usage of like and as. Then we will apply our knowledge in a structured step by step manner to solve the above GMATprep question.

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## LIKE AND AS



Two seemingly simple words – like and as – often create havoc in the minds of test takers when they both appear in the answer choices in a sentence correction question. People wonder about the following two points:

1. For stating comparison should I use “as” or “like”?
2. When is “as + noun” correct and when is “as + clause” correct?

Lets consider for example the following GMATPrep question.

As with those of humans, the DNA of grape plants contains sites where certain unique sequences of nucleotides are repeated over and over.

- A. **As** with those of humans, the DNA of grape plants contains sites where
- B. **As** human DNA, the DNA of grape plants contain sites in which
- C. **As** it is with human DNA, the DNA of grape plants, containing sites in which
- D. **Like** human, the DNA of grape plants contain sites where
- E. **Like** human DNA, the DNA of grape plants contains sites in which

The two main things to keep in mind to solve such questions are as follows:

- Understand what meaning like and as communicate
- Understand the intended meaning of the sentence so that you can wisely choose the appropriate word.

In this article we will first discuss why there is confusion with regards to usage of like and as. Then we will apply our knowledge in a structured step by step manner to solve the above GMATprep question.

### LIKE AND AS – THE POINT OF CONFUSION

‘As’ plays multiple roles and thereby is used in different grammatical constructions, one of which coincides with how like is used.

	As	Like
for stating Comparison	✓	✓

for stating Function	✓	✗
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Both 'like' and 'as' are used for stating a comparison. So often people are confused whether they should use 'like' or 'as' to state the comparison. Furthermore, 'as' is also used to present function. And this brings us to another point of confusion.

	As	Like
for stating Comparison	As + Clause	Like + Noun
for stating Function	As + Noun	N/A

Because 'as' and 'like' are followed by nouns but they do so while presenting two different meanings, there is often a confusion regarding the intended meaning communicated by the sentence and the grammatical correctness of the sentence.

Now lets see this in detail.

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### LIKE AND AS - STATE COMPARISON

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Both 'like' and 'as' are used to state comparisons. For example:

- Amy takes care of the children in the day care like a mother. ✓
- Amy takes care of the children in the day care as a mother does. ✓

Both sentences are correct. Both the sentences above convey the meaning that Amy takes care of the children "in the same way" as a mother takes care of her children.

But notice the usage here – 'like' is followed by a noun and 'as' is followed by a clause. This grammatical construction should be kept in mind.

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WHEN USED TO STATE COMPARISON, 'AS' SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY  
A CLAUSE.

LIKE IS ALWAYS USED TO SHOW COMPARISON AND IS FOLLOWED BY  
A NOUN OR A PRONOUN.

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### AS – CAN ALSO PRESENT FUNCTION

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Apart from stating comparison, "as" can also be used to state "role" or "function". For example:

John has joined the organization as a researcher.

In this sentence, 'as' does not show a comparison. This sentence implies that John is indeed a researcher in the new organization. Notice that per this sentence John has not been compared to a researcher. John is indeed a researcher. So his role has been presented. And hence 'as' is used to present role or function of a person.

Notice the grammatical construction – ‘as’ has been followed by a noun. This should always be kept in mind.

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WHEN USED TO STATE ROLE OR FUNCTION, ‘AS’ SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY A NOUN.

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## LIKE AND AS – CONFUSION RESOLUTION

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Now that we understand the source of confusion between like and as, let's see how we can resolve this confusion. The most sure shot way of resolving this confusion is to understand from the context of the sentence whether a comparison needs to be presented or function needs to be presented. Once you determine this, then you may use like and as appropriately to state the intended meaning.

Let's take John's example again:

John has joined the organization as a researcher.

Here is my thought process:

- Step 1. I see the word “as”.
- Step 2. I ask the question – “does the sentence intend to draw a comparison or state a role”?
- Step 3. I answer the question from the context –
  - i. John has joined the organization.
  - ii. Let's first find out if comparison makes sense here.
    - Saying that John has joined organization as a researcher does – is non-sensical. It is not a common characteristic of a researcher to join organization. So stating comparison is not logical here.
  - iii. Let's now find if role has been presented here.
    - Saying that John will play a role of a researcher in this new organization makes perfect sense. So here as has been used to present role.
- Step 4. I check if grammatically “as” has been used appropriately.
  - i. Yes, since “as” is used to present function, it should be followed by a noun. In this sentence “a researcher” is a noun. So correct.

Let's take another example:

John has joined Biotech industry as his brother.

Here is my thought process:

- Step 1. I see the word “as”.
- Step 2. I ask the question – “does the sentence intend to draw a comparison or state a role”?

- Step 3. I answer the question from the context –
- i. John has joined the organization.
  - ii. Lets first find out if comparison makes sense here.
    - Saying that John has joined biotech industry as his brother did makes sense. His brother joined biotech industry and so did John. So stating comparison is logical here.
  - iii. Lets now make sure that stating a “role” is clearly non-sensical
    - Saying that John will play a role of his own brother in biotech industry is non-sensical. What does being a brother in an industry mean? Nothing. Yes being a researcher in an industry means something but not being a brother. So notice how context drives the logical and illogical meaning.
- Step 4. I check if grammatically “as” has been used appropriately.
- i. No, since “as” is used to present comparison, it should be followed by a clause. In this sentence “his brother” is a noun and hence this sentence is not correct. It should be corrected in one of the following ways:
    - John has joined Biotech industry as his brother did.
    - John has joined Biotech industry like his brother.

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## STRUCTURED APPROACH TO SOLVING GMAT SC QUESTIONS

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With this understanding, now we can solve the GMATPrep question. Here we will integrate our knowledge of as and like with e-GMAT 3-step process.

1. Understand the meaning of the original sentence.
2. Determine the errors in the original sentence.
3. Apply process of elimination to find the correct answer.

Our knowledge of “like” vs “as” will be applicable in step 1 – we will determine the intended role of the word in the context of the sentence. Then our knowledge of grammatical construction of like and as will be applicable in step 2 – we will make sure that the word has been used appropriately.

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## CONCLUDING WORDS

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In order to cover the usage of like and as, we have developed 4 files.

1. Like Concept File – This file explains how like should be used correctly in a sentence. In all there 15 example sentences and 10 questions in the quizzes in this concept file.
2. As Concept File – This file explains the various functions of as. In all there are 6 examples and 8 questions in the quiz.
3. Like vs As Concept File – In this file we first explain the source of confusion between as and like. Then we discuss how this confusion should be resolved and how this process can be used when solving SC questions. We present the confusion and its resolution using 6 different examples. We also solve 3 official SC questions using the suggested approach.

4. Like Vs. As Application File – Like a typical SC application file, you will first attempt 8 SC questions and then you will be able to view detailed solutions.