



Comprehensive Idiom **List**

GMAT[®] Sentence Correction

Introduction

An idiom, by definition, is the commonly and universally accepted usage of a group of words that could actually have different meanings when used individually. There is no reason why a particular idiom is correct or incorrect.

While there are more than 15000 idioms in the English language, the GMAT favors only a fraction of these. We have provided over the next few pages a comprehensive list of the commonly tested Idioms on the GMAT along with their correct and incorrect usages (wherever applicable). Go through this list and memorize the ones that your ear doesn't recognize.

There is a more concise Idiom List available in the SC Grail. If you complete that list, you should be good to tackle around 90% of the Idiom-related questions that the GMAT may throw at you. This list is for those students who want a more comprehensive resource for idioms or who have always struggled with idioms on the GMAT.

Aristotle Prep Comprehensive Idiom List

1. a means to - something done to achieve something else

Correct: For some people, laptops are just a means to an end.

Incorrect: For some people, laptops are just a means for an end.

Incorrect: For some people, laptops are just the means to an end.

2. an instance of – an example of

Correct: This is a real life instance of plagiarism

3. ability to

Correct: Cats have the ability to see in the dark

Incorrect: Cats have the ability of seeing in the dark

4. access to

Correct: The editor has access to the entire manuscript.

Incorrect: The editor has access of the entire manuscript.

Incorrect: The editor has access for the entire manuscript.

5. accused of

Correct: John has been accused of theft

Incorrect: John has been accused to have committed theft

Incorrect: John has been accused with theft

6. act as - to serve in some special capacity, possibly temporarily

Correct: Modern mobile phones can act as cameras.

Incorrect: Modern mobile phones can act like cameras

7. act like - behave in a certain way (will almost always refer to animate things)

Correct: "Please stop acting like a kid", said the producer to the actor.

Incorrect: "Please stop acting as a kid", said the producer to the actor.

8. agree with - to hold the same opinion or judgment. You normally agree with a person or an idea,

Correct: Your analysis agrees with mine

OR, it could also mean to look good or go well in combination with something else,

Correct: This dress does not agree with these shoes.

9. agree to - to consent to something or to approve something. You normally agree to inanimate things such as a plan or a proposal.

Correct: I agree to your proposal of a buyout.

Correct: Russia and Turkey have agreed to speed up the launch of the energy deal.

10. agree on/upon – to agree to the choice of someone or something (usually used with date or time)

Correct: Let's try to agree upon a date for the vacation

Correct: John & Tina agree upon the need to hire a trainer

11. aid in - to help someone in some kind of trouble

Correct: The motorists needed aid in finding their way out.

Incorrect: The motorists needed aid to find their way out.

12. among X and Y – to evaluate more than 2 options

Correct: John can't decide among a laptop, a mobile phone and a media player.

Incorrect: John can't decide between a laptop, a mobile phone and a media player.

13. appear to be

Correct: This dish appears to be undercooked

14. appeal to - to please or to attract someone

Correct: Soap operas don't appeal to me.

Correct: The idea of taking a vacation appeals to me a lot.

15. approve/disapprove of - to take a favorable/unfavorable view of someone/something.

Correct: The chairman approves of the new marketing plan

Correct: I disapprove of the use of cheating to pass a test.

16. as a result of – because of

Correct - The match has been postponed as a result of rain

17. as an adolescent/a teenager/a child

Correct: As an adolescent, John suffered from tonsillitis.

Incorrect: While in adolescence, John suffered from tonsillitis.

18. as good as - almost or nearly

Correct: The landlord owes me an apology - he as good as called me a thief.

Correct: According to the producer, the movie is as good as complete.

19. as great as – used for comparison

Correct: Is the novel as great as is being reported in the media?

20. as many/much as – used to put emphasis on something

Correct: Jerry made as many as fifteen mistakes in the test.

21. as many/much X as Y

Correct: I have got as many books as you do.

22. ask for - to try to obtain by requesting

Correct: -The child asked for a glass of water

OR, to behave in a provocative manner

Correct: He is asking for trouble

23. associate with - to be friendly with someone

Correct: Jacob likes to associate with honest people.

Incorrect: Jacob likes to associate among honest people.

24. associate X with Y - to link someone/something to some other thing or person

Correct: John always associates coke with pizza

Incorrect: John always associates coke to pizza

25. attend to - to take care of the needs of someone or something

Correct: Tim is attending to his sick mother

26. attribute X to Y - to believe that someone or something is the source of something.

Correct: We attribute our success to good fortune.

Incorrect: We attribute our success from good fortune.

27. based on

Correct: This movie is based on a true story

28. be afraid of

Correct: Tim is afraid of the dark.

Incorrect: Tim is afraid from the dark.

29. believe to be

Correct: I believe John's version to be the truth

Incorrect: I believe John's version as the truth

30. better served by X than by Y

Correct: No city seems better served by motorway beltways than Madrid

31. better than

Correct: My car is better than yours

Incorrect: My car is better from yours

32. between X and Y – used to choose between two things only

Correct: He had to choose between yoga and dance.

Incorrect: He had to choose between yoga or dance.

33. both X and Y

Correct: Both John and Jack are coming for dinner.

34. capable of

Correct: Jerry is capable of great feats of strength.

Incorrect: Jerry is capable for great feats of strength.

35. care about - to hold someone or something dear

Correct: John cares a lot about his family.

36. care for – can be used interchangeably with 'care about'

Correct: John cares a lot for his family.

37. centres on - to focus on someone or something in particular

Correct: The conversation centered on Mozart's contribution to music

38. choose as - select

Correct: We choose him as our representative

Incorrect: We choose him to be our representative

39. choose X for Y

Correct: I chose an interesting gift for their anniversary.

40. claim that – used while proclaiming something

Correct: Walter claims that he can run backwards.

41. claim to – used to take control of assets or will

Correct: The eldest son laid claim to the father's property.

42. claim to be – used while claiming to be some other person

Correct: The man claimed to be John's long lost son.

Incorrect: He is claimed as the best batsman of all times.

43. compare to – usually used to praise someone by pointing similarities with someone else

Correct: In Argentina, Maradona is often compared to God.

44. compare with – used for actual comparison (as we know it)

Correct: John is comparing a BMW with a Mercedes.

45. composed of – made up of

Correct: The team is composed of people from every department.

Incorrect: The team is composed from people of every department.

46. conceive of X as - to think of someone or something as being someone or something else

Correct: I can't conceive of you as a scientist.

Incorrect: I can't conceive of you to be a scientist

47. concerned with – involved with or connected to

Correct: This topic is concerned with the use of DNA sequencing

48. concerned about – worried about

Correct: I am concerned about my brother's health

Incorrect: I am concerned for my brother's health

49. conform to - to agree with or behave within guidelines or regulations

Correct: Does my dress conform to your regulations?

Incorrect: Does my dress conform with your regulations?

50. confirm with

Correct: John is confirming the plan with Jack

51. connection between X and Y

Correct: There is no connection between Tim and Larry

52. consequence of - be the result of

Correct: Rising temperatures are a consequence of global warming

53. consider X Y – think of as

Correct: I consider myself a close friend of the rockstar.

Incorrect: I consider myself to be a close friend of the rockstar

Incorrect: I consider myself as a close friend of the rockstar

54. contend that – claim or state

Correct: John contends that his friend is innocent.

55. contend with – compete with someone for something

Correct: Jack is contending with Jerry for the award

56. continue with – carry on with an action

Correct: Tim has been asked to continue with his training

57. contrast X with Y – compare two dissimilar things which complement each other

Correct: Jenna is contrasting her casual jeans with a formal top.

58. correlate with - to match or equate with something.

Correct: The facts don't correlate with her story.

Incorrect: The facts don't correlate to her story.

59. cost(s) associated with

Correct: The costs associated with setting up a factory are prohibitive.

60. count on – depend on

Correct: We can count on John to complete the project.

61. credited with – credit person with accomplishment (use this when person comes first)

Correct: Newton is credited with the discovery of gravity

Incorrect: Newton is credited as discovering gravity

Incorrect: Newton is credited to having discovered gravity

Incorrect: Newton is credited for discovering the laws of gravity

62. credited to - credit accomplishment to person

Correct: The team credits its success to good fortune

Incorrect: The team credits its success with good fortune

63. credit for – (think in terms of) a credit note

Correct: Telenet gave Tim a credit for \$100 because of an interruption in service.

64. dated at – to denote a time period

Correct: The document has been dated at 100 years old.

Incorrect: The document has been dated at being 100 years old.

Incorrect: The document has been dated as being 100 years old.

65. date from - to have an existence that extends from a particular time

Correct: These CDs date from the early 70s.

66. debate about/on/over – Discuss in detail

Correct: The MPs debate about the bill tomorrow

Correct: The MPs debate over the bill tomorrow

Correct: The MPs debate on the bill tomorrow

Incorrect: The MPs debate for the bill tomorrow

67. decide on – select

Correct: Tina decided on the chocolate flavored ice cream.

68. declared (takes nothing)

Correct: The monarch declared all fundamental rights unconstitutional.

Incorrect: The monarch declared all fundamental rights as unconstitutional.

Incorrect: The monarch declared all fundamental rights to be unconstitutional.

69. defined as

Correct: Evaporation is defined as the process in which water changes into vapour.

Incorrect: Evaporation is defined in the process in which water changes into vapour.

70. delighted to – be glad

Correct: I'm delighted to make your acquaintance.

Incorrect: I'm delighted at making your acquaintance.

71. demand that – insist upon something

Correct: John demands that he be given a raise.

Incorrect: John demands for a raise.

72. dependent on

Correct : The team's success is dependent on him

73. depicted as - to show someone as something

Correct: The director depicted the actor as a mutant.

Incorrect: The director depicted the actor to be a mutant.

74. determined by

Correct: Language structure is partly determined by social structure

Incorrect: Language structure is partly determined from social structure

75. differ/different from

Correct: Myopia differs from hypermetropia

Correct: I am very different from my twin sister.

Incorrect: Her hobbies are different than mine

76. disagree with (person/idea) – same as agree with

Correct: I disagree with you on this subject

77. disclose to - reveal

Correct: Please disclose the details to me at once.

78. discourage from

Correct: I discouraged them from filing a complaint

Incorrect: I discouraged them to file a complaint

79. dispute over

Correct: There is a dispute over the new name of the city

80. distinguish X from Y

Correct: Criminals cannot distinguish right from wrong.

Correct: Psoriatic arthritis can be difficult to distinguish from rheumatoid arthritis

81. distinguish/distinction between X and Y

Correct: Criminals cannot distinguish between right and wrong.

82. doubt that

Correct: I doubt that his venture will succeed

Incorrect: I doubt whether his venture will succeed

83. draw attention to

Correct: Could I draw your attention to this slide?

84. drawn to – attracted to

Correct: Jerry was drawn to the sports car

Incorrect: Jerry was drawn at the sports car

85. drawn upon – used up

Correct: By the end of the contest the boxer had drawn upon all the energy he had.

86. dream about

Correct: All the time I dream about football.

Incorrect: All the time I dream of football

87. dwindle away – become less or smaller

Correct: Her will power is starting to dwindle away.

88. either X or Y

Correct: I will have either ice cream or pastry

89. elect as

Correct: Freddie was elected as the president of our club.

Incorrect: Freddie was elected to be the president of our club.

Incorrect: Freddie was elected to act as the president of our club.

90. elect to

Correct: Tom was elected to the office by the party members.

Incorrect: Tom was elected for the office by the party members

91. emerge as

Correct: The weakest candidate emerged as the winner

Incorrect: The weakest candidate emerged to be the winner

92. enable X to Y

Correct: This donation will enable the college to buy a new projector

93. encourage X to Y

Correct: We encouraged Mary to develop her singing talents

94. encourage in

Correct: We encouraged Mary in her singing career

95. enough to

Correct: The boy was not tall enough to reach the window.

Incorrect: The boy was short enough not to reach the window.

96. escape from – run away from

Correct: The thief has escaped from the prison.

97. escape notice – to go unnoticed

Correct: I think my earlier request escaped your notice.

98. essential to

Correct: Oxygen is essential to life.

Incorrect: Oxygen is essential for life.

99. estimated to be

Correct: The sculpture was estimated to be worth much more than the base price.

Incorrect: The sculpture was estimated at worth much more than the base price.

100. estimated at – used to denote the place where the estimation was done

Correct: The worth of the sculpture was estimated at Madrid.

101. except for

Correct: This house is beautiful and perfect except for one thing - the price

102. expect to

Correct: The ruler was expected to protect his people.

Incorrect: The ruler is expected that he should protect his people.

103. expect X of Y - to anticipate that someone will do something

Correct: I expected better of John.

104. expect from - to be waiting for something from someone

Correct: I am expecting a parcel from my brother.

105. expend on – spend on

Correct: Don't expend too much effort on this document.

106. explain away - to explain something so that it is no longer a problem

Correct: You can't just explain away all your mistakes

107. expose to

Correct: Do not expose the film to direct sunlight.

108.fail on - to give someone an unsatisfactory grade on an assignment or test (somebody will fail you on something)

Correct: The teacher failed half the class on the test

109.fail in - to have not earned passing or satisfactory grades in some school subject (you will fail in something)

Correct: I hope I do not fail in the test.

110.fascinated by

Correct: John is fascinated by his boss

Incorrect: John is fascinated with his boss

111.flee from - run away

Correct: The dogs fled from their cruel master.

112.flee to

Correct: The dogs fled to their kennel

113.focus on

Correct: Tom is trying to focus on the problem at hand.

114.forbid X to do Y

Correct: John forbid his driver to enter the house

Incorrect: John forbid his driver from entering the house

115.from X to Y

Correct: I am travelling from New York to London

116.grow from

Correct: A plant grows from a seed

117.grow into

Correct: The child grew into a tall, handsome teenager

118.grow out of

Correct: A big problem has grown out of a tiny misunderstanding

119.identical with

Correct: My problem is identical with yours.

Incorrect: My problem is identical to yours.

120.in contrast to/with X, Y is.... – On the GMAT both 'contrast to' and 'contrast with' are considered correct

In 'Contrast to', 'contrast' is used as a noun; this is mainly used to show the dissimilarity between two things.

Correct: John's working style is a contrast to Jacob's.

In 'Contrast with', 'contrast' is used as a verb and hence denotes the actual act of contrasting two things

Correct: John is contrasting his working style with that of Jacob.

121.in danger of –ing/danger to

Correct: John is in danger of contracting malaria

Correct: Rampant cutting of trees is a danger to the ecology

122.in order to

Correct: She began taking classes in order to learn French.

Incorrect: She began taking classes in order that she could learn French.

123.independent from

Correct: The children have been independent from their parents since childhood

124.independent of

Correct: His reasoning was flawed, and appeared to be independent of any logic.

125.indicate that

Correct: Studies indicate that women actually live longer than men.

126.indicate to

Correct: Fred indicated his assent to me

127.indifferent towards

Correct: Can you make yourself indifferent towards someone you love?

128.inherit from

Correct: Jeanne has inherited her complexion from her mother.

129.insist that

Correct: The members insisted that the speaker be removed from his post.

130.invest in

Correct: John has invested 6 weeks in preparing for the test.

131.invest with

Correct: The agreement invests the vice-chairman with the authority to act on the chairman's behalf in certain conditions.

132.isolated from

Correct: We isolated the chemicals from the source of the leak

133.just as X , so Y – used to point out similarities

Correct: Just as Katy is a champion swimmer, so is Angie.

134.know to do X

Correct: Even as a young boy he was known to explore different ways of doing things.

Incorrect: Even as a young boy, he was known as wanting to explore different ways of doing things.

135.lead away

Correct: The police led the criminal away from the other accused.

136.lead to

Correct: A life of sin will inevitably lead to suffering.

137.less X than Y

Correct: My problem is less serious than yours

138.likely to be

Correct: The CEO is likely to be arrested today

139.localized in

Correct: Are International charities becoming more localized in the economic crisis?

140.manage with

Correct: The college has been asked to manage with the funds that it has

141.mandate that

Correct: The rules of war mandate that no prisoner be tortured for information.

142.mistake X for Y

Correct: John mistook a Ferrari for a Lamborghini

Incorrect: John mistook a Ferrari as a Lamborghini

Incorrect: John mistook a Ferrari to be a Lamborghini

143. modeled after

Correct: The Indian constitution is modeled after the British constitution

144. more...than

Correct: I am more clever than my brother

145. much as

Correct: Much as Lola needed the car, she had to refuse.

146. native of – use for humans

Correct: John is a native of the US

147. native to – use for plants or animal species

Correct: The Royal Bengal Tiger is native to the Sunderbans

148. necessary to

Correct: The CEO deemed it necessary to ask the employee to resign.

149. neither X nor Y

Correct: We could neither walk nor drive to the venue.

Incorrect: We could neither walk or drive to the venue

150. no less... than

Correct: My achievement is no less than his achievement

151. not only X but also Y

Correct: Not only is he very intelligent, but also very humble.

152. not so much X as Y

Correct: I am not so much sad as perplexed

153. not X but rather Y

Correct: I would have not tea but rather coffee

154. noted that

Correct: The scientists noted that the aspect ratio remained unchanged.

155. opinion on

Correct: John has very strong opinions on censorship.

156. originate in

Correct: All his troubles originate in his mind.

157. originate from

Correct: Some of our customs originate from past beliefs

158. permit X to Y

Correct: John permitted his son to drive to college.

159. permit (someone) through

Correct: Can you permit me through the door please?

160. permit up

Correct: She would not permit me up the ladder

161. persuade X to Y

Correct: I persuaded Tim to complete my assignment

162. prefer X to Y

Correct: Jack prefers tea to coffee

Incorrect: Jack prefers tea over coffee

163. preoccupied with

Correct: The country's mind is preoccupied with soccer

164. prized above

Correct: He prized his only child above everything else in the world

165. prized as

Correct: Designer corals have been prized as jewelry for nearly 5000 years

166. prized for

Correct: Gold jewellery has been prized for thousands of years

167. prohibit X from Y

Correct: The landlord has prohibited John from coming late in the night.

168.potential to

Correct: The coach thinks Jack has the potential to play at the national level

169.promise to

Correct: Is this shirt promised to anyone?

170.range from X to Y

Correct: The students' marks range from good to average.

171.range over

Correct: These trees range over a very large territory

172.rates for

Correct: John enquired the rates for apples

173.refer to

Correct: My friend referred me to a specialist.

Correct: Evaporation refers to a scientific term.

174.regard as

Correct: I have always regarded you as my brother.

175.reluctant to

Correct: The child was reluctant to attend the class.

Incorrect: The child was reluctant about attending the class.

176.require of

Correct: John wants to know what is required of him in this job.

177.require that X

Correct: The job requires that John supervise the entire operations of the assembly line.

178.require X to

Correct: The job requires John to supervise the entire operations of the assembly line.

179.require to

Correct: John was required to supervise the entire operations of the assembly line.

180.resemble in

Correct: This resembles chocolate ice cream in flavor, but not in consistency.

181.responsible for

Correct: The CEO is responsible for meeting the assigned targets

182.responsibility to

Correct: It is the CEO's responsibility to meet the assigned targets

183.restrictions on

Correct: The US has imposed restrictions on the licensing of firearms

184.result from

Correct: It will be interesting to see what results from the police's efforts.

185.result in

Correct: I hope that this will result in the police finding your car.

186.sacrifice X for Y

Correct: Would you sacrifice your job for a chance to go to Europe?

187.sacrifice to

Correct: I sacrificed a lot of money to visit Europe

188.seek out

Correct: Jenny sought out a helper for her mother.

189.seek from

Correct: The prisoner seeks pardon from the victim

190.seek after

Correct: The police continue to seek after the thief who stole John's car.

191.seem like

Correct: The boss seemed like a nice person when I met him

192.seem to

Correct: The accused seemed to be hiding something.

Incorrect: The accused seemed like hiding something

193.sequence of

Correct: John narrated the entire sequence of events to the cops.

194.similar to

Correct: My house is similar to yours.

195.so X as to Y – used to denote cause and effect. Cannot be used to replace 'in order to'

Correct: John's grades are so poor as to lead to his expulsion from the school.

Incorrect: Jack works out every day so as to (in order to) build his stamina.

196.so X that Y

Correct: Jerry is so soft-spoken that one can barely hear him speak

197.so much as – can mean 'but rather'

Correct: I'm not looking at him so much as I am studying his jacket.

Or, can also mean 'even'

Correct: There was not so much as a speck of dust in the house.

198.speak from

Correct: The chairman claimed that he was speaking from experience

199. speak up

Correct: Sheena wants to speak up for the rights of the homeless.

200. speak with

Correct: I will speak with John about this problem

201. speak for

Correct: The company's astounding profits speak for themselves

202. subscribe to

Correct: I do not subscribe to the view that John is guilty

203. such X as Y and Z

Correct: This group includes such cars as BMW and Audi.

204. targeted at

Correct: The new ad for lawnmowers is targeted at gardeners

205. the more/greater X the more/greater Y

Correct: The more the prices rise, the more the demand increases.

206. the same to X as to Y

Correct: This color looks the same to me as it would to anyone else.

207. think of X as Y

Correct: John thinks of Jack as his best friend

208.train to

Correct: He was trained to become an athlete ever since he was a child.

Incorrect: He was trained as an athlete ever since he was a child.

209.try to

Correct: John said he would try to come on time.

Incorrect: John said he would try and come on time

210.used X as Y

Correct: For centuries, people have been using herbs as remedies for the different diseases

211.unlike X, Y

Correct: Unlike John, Tom wrote a good essay.

Incorrect: Unlike John, Tom's essay was good.

Correct: Unlike John's essay, Tom's essay was good.

212.view X as Y

Correct: The management views the problem as an opportunity

Incorrect: The management views the problem to be an opportunity

213.whether to

Correct: John is unable to decide whether to go to Harvard or Stanford. (wouldn't you want to be in his shoes 😊)

214. with the aim of '(verb)ing'

Correct: Jerry is training for six hours everyday with the aim of winning the marathon.

215. worried about

Correct: I am worried about my parents

216. X enough to Y

Correct: The temperature outside is high enough to cause a heat stroke.

217. X instead of Y

Correct: I will have tea instead of coffee

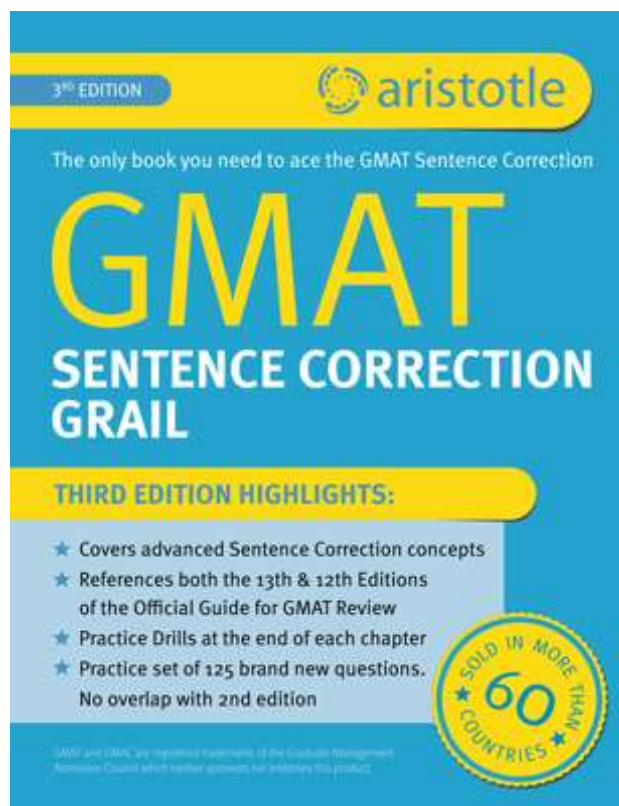
218. X is attributed to Y

Correct: The CEO has attributed the loss to the economic recession earlier in the year

219. X is to Y what W is to Z

Correct: You are to your parents what I am to mine.

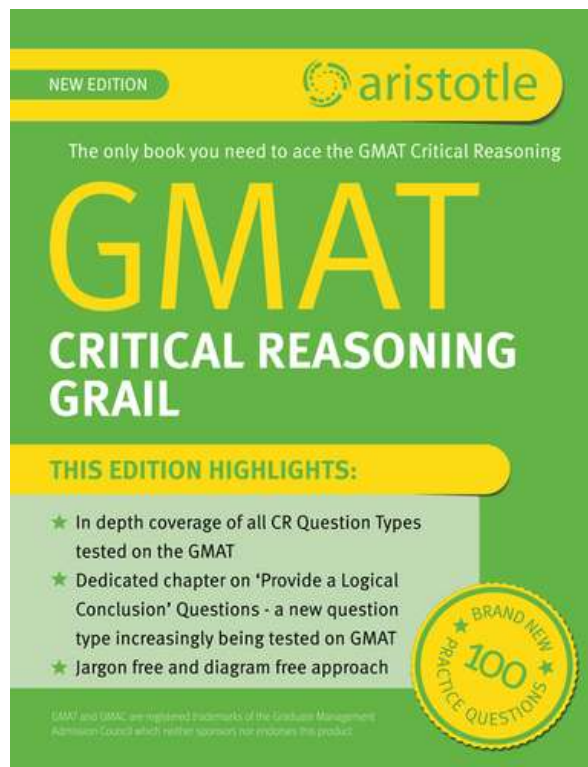
The SC Grail 3rd edition



Here are some standout features of the SC Grail:

- Covers the entire gamut of concepts tested on Sentence Correction, from the most basic ones to the more advanced ones
- Helps you master sentence correction in a step-by-step manner.
- Provides Targeted Practice drills at the end of each chapter for conceptual clarity
- Does not just give pages of theory but also helps you understand how a concept is tested on actual GMAT questions by referencing the Official Guide for GMAT Review 13th or the 12th edition whenever necessary
- Devotes an entire section to what the GMAT likes and dislikes between two options such as *whether and if*, *like and as*, *will and would*, etc.

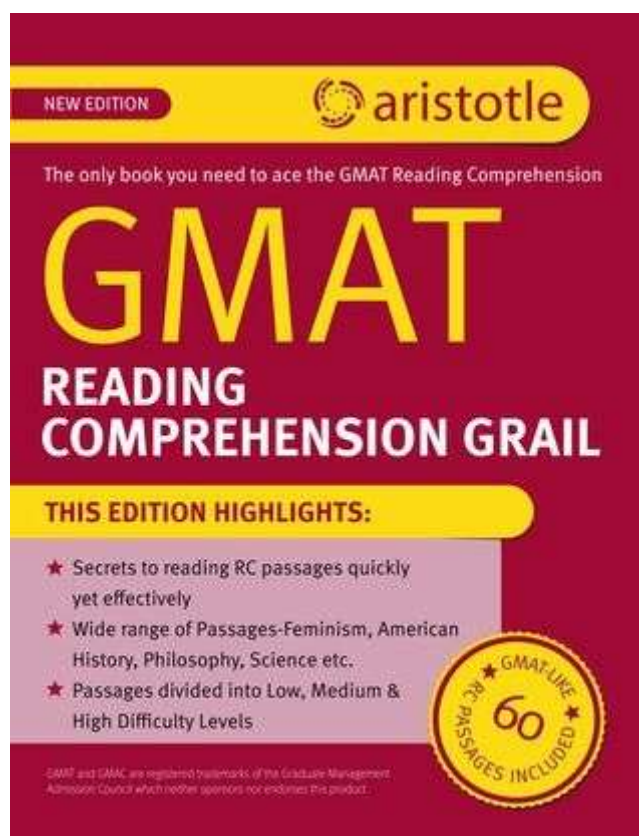
The CR Grail



Here are some standout features of the CR Grail:

- In depth coverage of all CR Question Types tested on the GMAT
- Dedicated chapter for 'Provide a Logical Conclusion' Questions – a new question type increasingly tested on the GMAT
- Brand new 100 question practice set for Intensive practice
- Jargon free and diagram free language with focus on understanding the meaning of arguments
- Quick Recall chapter at the end that provides a quick revision of all CR concepts discussed in the book

The RC Grail



Here are some standout features of the RC Grail:

- Provides a proven strategy to approach RC Passages on the GMAT.
- Describes the question types tested on the GMAT - How to identify and approach each question type. Also discusses the common traps to look out for in each question type
- Discusses strategies on Time Management, Intelligent Guessing, Effective Reading, etc.
- Contains 60 GMAT-like Practice passages with more than 200 questions along with detailed explanations for each
- Topic, Scope, and Passage Map provided for each passage
- Passages divided into three difficulty levels - Low, Medium, and High