



Reading Comprehension - The Definitive Strategies Guide (2022)

**Always look for WRONG answers. DON'T look for the RIGHT ones. WHY?
Because it's much easier to find the correct answer after eliminating all the
WRONG choices than finding it directly.**

1) 3 types of passages

Specific science passages:

- Tone (neutral or objective);
- Contains lots of jargons (don't pay too much attention to them);
- Need to focus on the MAIN IDEA only

General science passages:

- History of scientific discovery; development of a scientific procedure or method; why it fails or succeeds in explaining a certain phenomenon.
- Tone (neutral or objective, may express an opinion),
- Contains more points of views

Non-science passage:

- Humanities/social studies topics (literature/art) (history; sociology; cultural studies)
- Humanities: Take a specific point of view // to compare several views
- Social studies: introduce era/event focusing on specific problem/topic/person/group of persons
- Tone: Vary (neutral – contains descriptions of facts and ideas) (opinionated – judgments and criticisms)

2) Basic Approach

(a) Get a sense of passage

- Don't read and try to memorize all details – DON'T be such that FOOL
- 1-2 minutes: Get the sense of the passage (remember to TAKE NOTE)

Main idea (what's the passage saying)

- Read the first and last sentences of each paragraph.
- Skim through to find KEYWORDS (help identify paragraph's organization)

Organization (How the author structured the passage – the function of each paragraph – trying to convey what fragment of the main idea) - **VERY IMPORTANT**

- **Point and example:** A theory/idea + supporting details (examples/arguments)
- **Point-and-counterpoint:** some theories for explaining a phenomenon (Another, in addition, etc.)
- **Theory and critique:** common theory/idea/notion/belief + its flaws (admittedly, Yet, however, etc.)
- **Pros vs. cons:** both sides of an issue (however...contrast....)
- **Compare and contrast:** similarities + differences between some objects (similarly, in the same way, analogous, parallel, likewise, just as, also, as, etc.) (however, alternatively, by contrast, on the other hand, rather than, while, yet)
- **Historical cause and effect:** Sequences in chronological or the reverse order (prior to, as a result, therefore, consequently, then, thus, accordingly, since, because, due to, in light of, etc.)
- **Classification:** identifies/distinguishes between some types + branches to some subclasses (first, in addition, finally, also, another, division, divide, etc.)

(b) Figure out what question is asking (LEAD WORDS) – especially important to SPECIFIC question types.

- Read the sentence containing that LEAD WORD
- Read 5 lines below and above that sentence

(c) Find the relevant material in the passage (LEAD WORDS)

(d) Put the answer in your own words (NEW) – Why? Because it helps you use POE properly

(e) Use POE eliminate answer that disagree with your answer

- **Extreme statements are BAD:** must, the first, each, every, all, the best, only, totally, always, no. You shouldn't eliminate the answer containing those words immediately but should pay close attention to it.
- **Moderate statements are GOOD:** may, can, some, many, sometimes, often
- **Direct repetition from the passage:** one of the favorite tricks are information took from different paragraphs that are not relevant to the question → DON'T answer relying on your MEMORY
- **Ambiguous answer choices:** Remember the CORRECT answer should be indisputable. The wrong (even half-wrong-half-right) answer which is disputable (or could be analyzed in different ways) must be INCORRECT.

- **For MAIN IDEA/PURPOSE/STRUCTURE questions**

- Too specific (partly right or right on behalf of specific paragraph only)
- Too broad
- Not mentioned
- If you've got more than 1 choice. Refer back to the passage then use POE again

- **For TONE/ATTITUDE/STYLE questions, wrong choices would be**

- Portrays minorities, women or any modern nations in a negative light
- Disrespect the authors/the subjects of the reading passage
- Too negative/extreme. (usually the reading passages don't have strong emotions)
→ The style would never be violent, the author will never be irrational)
- The author is never detached (has no emotion at all): ~~apathy, indifference, detached ambivalence~~. Rather, it might be 'objective', 'impartial', 'unbiased'.

- **For Roman I, II, III questions:**

- LEAD WORDS
- Refer back to the passage, read and paraphrase with your own words (in mind)
- Read each I, II, III. If you find one that is correct (e.g: I) – eliminate all the answer choices that do not contain it (I). Then you will find the correct answer choice at the end of POE

- **DO NOT eliminate any choice just because you don't understand or know the meaning of some words in it. You should work on choices that you could define/understand properly.**