



SUPERCOURSE™

FOR THE

GRE

**The complete professional
coaching program for total
preparation and top scores**

Thomas H. Martinson

SUPERCOURSETM **FOR THE** **GRE**

Thomas H. Martinson



ARCO
NEW YORK

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CIP

A Letter to the Reader

Dear Reader,

The book you have just purchased is worth hundreds of dollars. Never before has a total—and academically respected—GRE preparation course been available in book form.

This year thousands of students will spend \$300 to \$600 (and even more) for expensive test preparation courses. Yet, this book can provide you with the benefits of an expensive course. You get:

- hundreds of proven strategies that take you inside the GRE
- advice that helps you think like the testmakers
- thousands of practice questions with complete explanations—the equivalent of ten GREs
- a diagnostic math test
- a 750-word vocabulary list that is actually based on GREs
- successful methods to control test anxiety

I know for a fact that this book offers the same kinds of strategies taught in expensive GRE preparation courses because I personally developed not one but two such courses for nationally known test preparation schools. You will learn:

- how to answer algebra questions without using algebra
- how to answer geometry questions just by looking at a picture
- how to avoid logical pitfalls that trap unwary test-takers
- how to answer even when you don't know a key vocabulary word
- when and how to guess

and much more.

In other words, this book contains everything you need to make sure you get your top score on the GRE. In my professional opinion, there is little offered by most commercial test preparation courses that you can't get for yourself by conscientious study of this book.

Thomas H. Martinson

Preface

There are three very important reasons for our publishing this book at this time. One, it proves that it is possible to improve your GRE score. Two, it offers a reasonably priced alternative to expensive schools and tutoring services that now compete among themselves for your preparation dollars. Three, it stands as an antidote to the current mania for quick fixes rather than conscientious preparation and study.

First, this book shows that the GRE is not invincible—that it does have patterns or clues that are inherent to the structure of the test. If you understand these patterns or clues, you can pursue them to your advantage. Consider an example.

At the beginning of a school year, a student receives a university loan of d dollars, which he deposits into a checking account. Each month, he receives p dollars from his parents and spends s dollars. If p is less than s , and the student makes up the difference by withdrawing from d , in how many months will d be exhausted?

- (A) $\frac{p-s}{d}$ (B) $\frac{d}{s-p}$ (C) $\frac{s-p}{d}$ (D) $\frac{d-p}{s}$ (E) $\frac{d}{p+s}$

This is a difficult math question. Perhaps no more than 15 to 20 percent of all test-takers would be able to answer it. But here is a strategy that lets you answer correctly even if you don't understand the algebra needed to set up a formula.

Just make the situation real by choosing some numbers for the letters in the problem. Assume, for example, that the loan was \$1,000 ($d = 1,000$), that the student receives \$200 per month from his parents ($p = 200$), and that he spends \$300 per month ($s = 300$). The student is spending \$100 per month more than his parents send him, which he withdraws from the checking account. At the rate of \$100 per month, the checking account will be empty in $\$1,000 \div 100 = 10$ months.

So, on the assumption that $d = 1,000$, $p = 200$, and $s = 300$, the correct formula will yield the number 10. Just substitute the assumed values into the choices until you find the one that works:

(A) $\frac{p-s}{d} = \frac{200-300}{1,000} = \frac{-100}{1,000} = -\frac{1}{10}$ (Wrong answer.)

(B) $\frac{d}{s-p} = \frac{1,000}{300-200} = \frac{1,000}{100} = 10$ (Correct!)

(C) $\frac{s-p}{d} = \frac{300-200}{1,000} = \frac{100}{1,000} = \frac{1}{10}$ (Wrong answer.)

(D) $\frac{d-p}{s} = \frac{1,000-200}{300} = \frac{800}{300} = \frac{8}{3}$ (Wrong answer.)

(E) $\frac{d}{p+s} = \frac{1,000}{200+300} = \frac{1,000}{500} = 2$ (Wrong answer.)

Nor is success here a matter of luck. Since the GRE is a multiple-choice test, any problem like this one (which asks for an algebraic formula) can be attacked in this way. The correct answer is there for the testing.

Given that there are dozens of strategies like this, common sense dictates that test-takers who know the pattern of the GRE enjoy an important competitive edge over those who do not.

Second, this book is a viable alternative to expensive coaching schools. The 400-plus pages of instructional material are the equivalent of the forty or fifty hours of lecture included in those programs.

Third, this book should help debunk a popular myth. There is currently in vogue an attitude that only a *little* preparation is needed.

There is nothing really new in these approaches. They offer many of the strategies and methods that have been used effectively on multiple-choice tests for years. What is new, however, is the "hype" or indoctrination that accompanies the strategies. Students are encouraged to believe that by learning a few easy rules, they can attain a top score without really having to think.

As you can see, preparation is effective, but it requires hard work. In point of fact, the only sure way to conquer the GRE is through conscientious study and hard work. In sum, the approach of this book can perhaps be best expressed by paraphrasing the claim often heard in a widely aired television commercial: "Our students get higher GRE scores the old-fashioned way—they earn them!"

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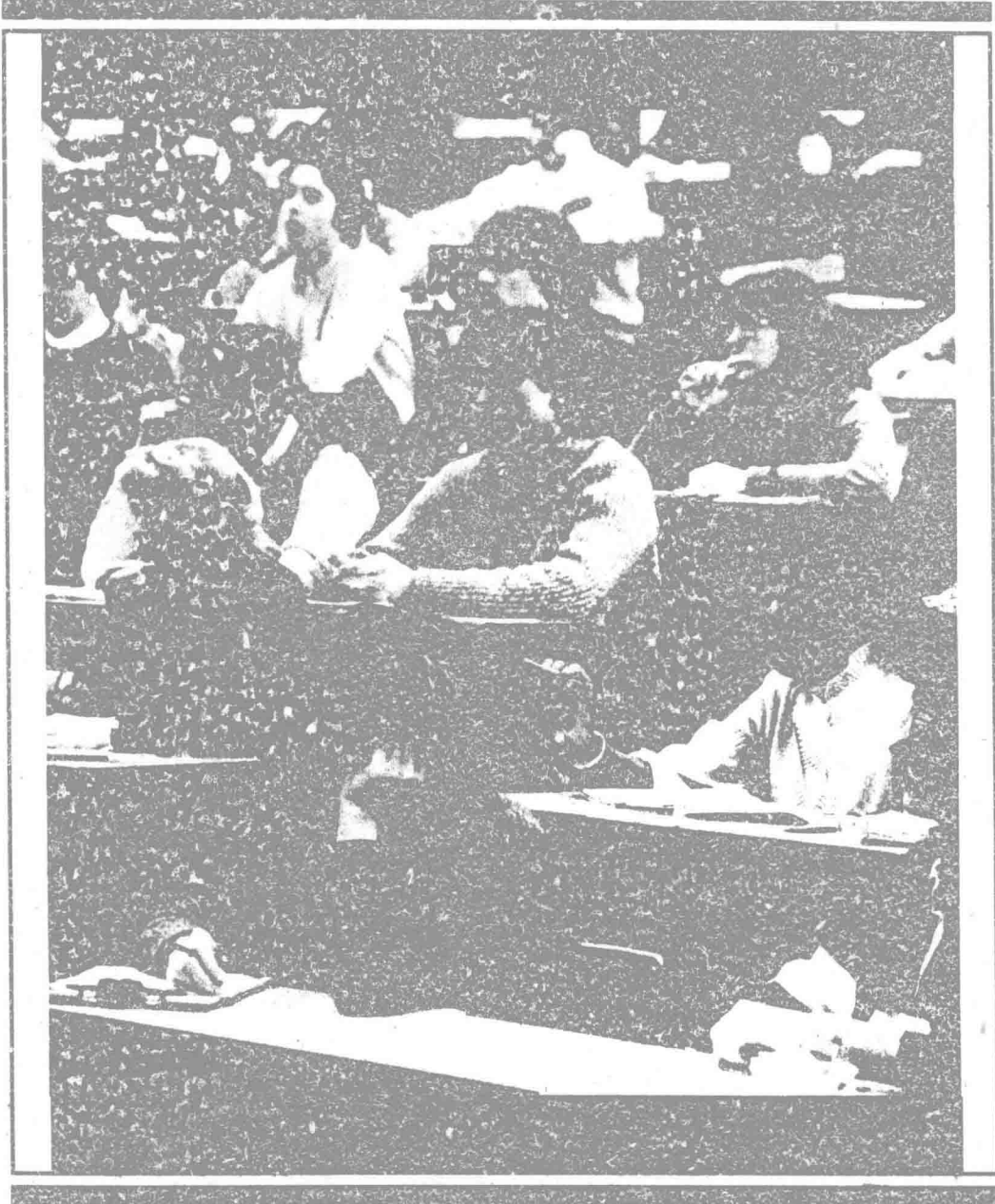
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PART ONE

The Anatomy of a Test



Getting Started

✓ Questions Addressed

What is the GRE?

What is the GREB?

What is the ETS?

How do I register for the GRE?

SYMBOLS



strategy



eliminating
suspects



fact



estimating



common
error



inquiry/
guessing



measuring



pattern



calculating



unlocking
the mystery



Dr. Watson



Sherlock
Holmes



smoking
gun



ladder of
difficulty

What Is the GRE?



Let's begin by sorting out some abbreviations such as GRE, GREB, and ETS. The letters GRE stand for Graduate Record Examinations, standardized exams given several times a year at various locations around the world. Many graduate schools use GRE scores as part of the admission process.

There is a GRE General Test plus GRE Subject Tests in seventeen disciplines such as Biology, Mathematics, and Psychology. This book is devoted to the GRE General Test, the most widely used of the GREs. If a school to which you are applying requires a Subject Test in addition to the General Test, check your bookstore for the availability of an ARCO book to help you prepare for that test. For purposes of simplicity, from here on, I will refer to the GRE General Test as the GRE.

The GRE includes verbal ability questions, math ability questions, and analytical ability questions. All questions used on the GRE are multiple-choice questions, and your answers are entered on a special answer sheet. After the test, answer sheets and testing materials are sent to central locations for processing; a few weeks later, your scores are sent to you and, according to your choice, to others, such as the schools to which you are applying.

The letters GREB stand for the Graduate Record Examinations Board, an independent committee that is affiliated with the Association of Graduate Schools and the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States. The GREB establishes the general policies that govern the GRE.

The letters ETS stand for Educational Testing Service. ETS is a private company with headquarters in Princeton, New Jersey, and offices in many other places. Educational Testing Service, as the name suggests, offers testing services, and one of its products is the GRE, which it administers under the policies set by the GREB. [ETS also produces the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), and sometimes produces the LSAT (Law School Admission Test).]

A few weeks before you want to take the GRE, contact ETS for registration materials:

Educational Testing Service
Graduate Record Examinations Program
CN 6000
Princeton, N.J. 08541-6000

or telephone:

(609) 771-7670



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Let's Look at the GRE

Questions Addressed

What verbal areas are tested by the GRE?

What math areas are tested by the GRE?

What analytical reasoning areas are tested by the GRE?

How many questions will I have?

How long will I have to answer the questions?

How long is the whole test?

What is the "experimental" section?

How is the GRE scored?

Is there a penalty for guessing?

1. Verbal Questions

- **Antonyms**
- **Analogies**
- **Sentence Completions**
- **Reading Comprehension**

2. Math Questions

- **Problem-Solving**
- **Quantitative Comparisons**
- **Graph Interpretation**

3. Analytical Ability

- **Logical Reasoning**
- **Analytical Reasoning**

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- Reading Comprehension

2. Math Questions

- Problem-Solving
- Quantitative Comparison
- Graph Interpretation

3. Analytical Ability

- Logical Reasoning
- Analytical Reasoning



The GRE is divided into seven 30-minute sections. Each section is separately timed. You will have two GRE-verbal sections, two GRE-math sections, two GRE-analytical sections, plus a wild card section. The wild card section may be verbal, or math, or analytical, but it will not count toward your score. The wild card section contains questions being tried out for future GREs. You will not, however, be told which is the wild card section.

Verbal Questions

The GRE uses four different kinds of verbal questions: antonyms, analogies, sentence completions, and reading comprehension.

Antonyms

Antonym questions ask you to find an opposite for a word.

Directions: Each question below consists of a word printed in capital letters followed by five lettered words or phrases. Choose the lettered word or phrase that is most nearly opposite in meaning to the word in capital letters. Since some of the questions require you to distinguish fine shades of meaning, be sure to consider all the choices before deciding which one is best.

EXAMPLE:

EXAGGERATE: (A) respond (B) understate (C) impress
(D) comfort (E) ignite

The answer to this antonym item is (B). To exaggerate means "to go beyond the truth" or "to overstate." So a good opposite is *understate*.