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- Analytical Writing
- Quantitative Comparison
- Data Interpretation
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新东方 GRE 考试指定培训教材

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WITH CD-ROM

16TH EDITION

Sharon Weiner-Green and Ira K. Wolf, Ph.D.

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Preface

As prospective graduate students concerned with professional advancement, you know the importance of using good tools and drawing on solid research. In this Fifteenth Edition of *Barron's How to Prepare for the GRE*, we offer you both.

This revision contains the fruits of our close study of the major changes in the GRE General Tests made public by the Graduate Record Examinations Board. We have scrutinized hundreds of actual GRE questions, traced dozens of GRE reading passages to their sources, analyzed subsets of questions by order of difficulty and question type. We have gone through all the topics in the new analytical writing section, categorizing the actual issues you will encounter on your test and analyzing the argument passages, pinpointing their logical flaws. In the process, we have come up with the following features, which should make this Sixteenth Edition particularly helpful to you:

Typical GRE Questions Analyzed

The Sixteenth Edition takes you step by step through dozens of verbal and mathematical questions that simulate actual GRE questions, showing you how to solve them and how to avoid going wrong.

Testing Tactics

The Sixteenth Edition provides you with dozens of proven, highlighted testing tactics that will help you attack the different types of questions on the GRE.

High-Frequency Word List

The Sixteenth Edition continues to give you an up-to-date 333-word High-Frequency Word List—333 words from *abate* to *zealot* that have been shown by computer analysis to occur and recur on actual published GREs—plus Barron's 3,500-word Master Word List, the college-level vocabulary list for over 40 years.

Comprehensive Mathematics Review

The Sixteenth Edition presents you with extensive mathematical review materials that provide a refresher course for students primarily involved in nonscientific disciplines.

GRE-Modeled Tests

The Sixteenth Edition offers you a full-length Diagnostic Test geared to the current GRE, a diagnostic test that will enable you to pinpoint your areas of weakness right away and concentrate your review on subjects in which you need the most work, plus five additional Model Tests, all with answers completely explained, that in format, difficulty, and content echo today's GRE.

Computer GRE Update

The Sixteenth Edition introduces you to the computer-based GRE—and, along with the accompanying CD-ROM, explains everything you need to know about the computer-adaptive GRE.

Analytical Writing Update

The Sixteenth Edition also provides you with an introduction to the GRE analytical writing section, familiarizing you with the range of topics covered and giving you helpful hints on how to write clear, cogent essays in no time at all.

This Sixteenth Edition once more upgrades what has long been a standard text. It reflects the contributions

of numerous teachers, editors, and coaches, and the dedication of the staff at Barron's. It also reflects the forensic and rhetorical skills of Lexy Green, Director of Debate at the College Preparatory School, to whom we owe special thanks. We, the authors, are indebted to all these individuals for their ongoing efforts to make this book America's outstanding GRE study guide.

TIMETABLE FOR A TYPICAL COMPUTER-BASED GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATION

Total Testing Time: 2 hours and 30 minutes

Section	Time Allowed	Description
	variable	<i>Tutorial</i>
1	30 minutes	<i>Verbal Ability</i> 6 sentence completion questions 7 analogy questions 8 reading comprehension questions 9 antonym questions
2	45 minutes	<i>Quantitative Ability</i> 14 quantitative comparison questions 10 discrete quantitative (standard multiple-choice) questions 4 data interpretation questions (tables/graphs)
		10-minute break
3	75 minutes 45 minutes 30 minutes	Analytical Writing: 1 essay giving one's perspective on an issue Analytical Writing: 1 essay analyzing an argument

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PART ONE

Introduction/
Diagnostic Test

1 What You Need to Know About the GRE

- **An Overview of the GRE General Test**
 - **Commonly Asked Questions About the GRE**
 - **GRE Test Format**
 - Verbal Ability**
 - Quantitative Ability**
 - Analytical Ability**
-

An Overview of the Computer-Based GRE General Test

The GRE General Test is an examination designed to measure the verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing skills you have developed in the course of your academic career. High GRE scores strongly correlate with the probability of success in graduate school: the higher you score, the more likely you are to complete your graduate degree. For this reason, many graduate and professional schools require applicants to take the GRE General Test, a test now given only on computer. (They may also require you to take a GRE Subject Test in your particular field. Subject Tests currently are available in 14 fields.)

The computer-based GRE General Test you take will have three or four sections. There will always be

- a 30-question verbal section (30 minutes)
- a 28-question quantitative section (45 minutes)
- an analytical writing section composed of two tasks (75 minutes)

In addition, there may be

- an unidentified experimental section, which would be a second verbal or quantitative section

Occasionally there may be

- an identified optional research section

The verbal section measures your ability to use words as tools in reasoning; you are tested not only on the extent of your vocabulary but on your ability to discern the relationships that exist both within written passages and among individual groups of words. The quantitative section measures your ability to use and reason with numbers or mathematical concepts; you are tested not on advanced mathematical theory but on general concepts expected to be part of everyone's academic background. The analytical writing section measures your ability to make rational assessments about unfamiliar, fictitious relationships and to logically present your perspective on an issue.

There are four very important points you should be aware of:

1. In each multiple-choice section, before you can move from one question to the next, you *must* answer the question currently on the screen.
2. Once you have clicked on an answer and confirmed your choice, you *cannot* go back to that question and change your answer choice.
3. Not every question is worth the same number of points; harder questions are worth more than easy ones.
4. The GRE General Test does *not* penalize you for incorrect answers. When you don't know an answer, try to make an educated guess by eliminating clearly incorrect choices; if you can't eliminate any choices, make a wild guess, and move on.

Keep these points in mind as you learn more about what's on the computer-based test, and, in the next chapter, about the tactics and strategies that will help you maximize your test score.

Commonly Asked Questions About the Computer-Based GRE

How Does the GRE Differ from Other Tests?

Most tests college students take are straightforward achievement tests. They attempt to find out how much you have learned, usually in a specific subject, and how well you can apply that information. Without emphasizing memorized data, the GRE General Test attempts to measure verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing skills that you have acquired over the years both in and out of school.

Although the GRE General Test is claimed to measure skills that you have developed over a long period, even a brief period of intensive study can make a great difference in your eventual GRE scores. By thoroughly familiarizing yourself with the process of computer-based testing, the GRE test format, and the various question types, you can enhance your chances of doing well on the test and of being accepted by the graduate school of your choice.

How Can I Learn to Handle the Mechanics of Taking a Computer-Based Test?

By using the CD-ROM that accompanies this book, you will become familiar with everything you need to know. In addition, at the test site before you get to the actual computer-based GRE, you have to work through four tutorials that train you in the mechanics of taking this particular test. They are

- How to Use a Mouse
- How to Select an Answer
- How to Use the Testing Tools
- How to Scroll

You can't skip these tutorials; they're mandatory, even for computer majors. They're also important—every computer program has its idiosyncrasies, and you need to familiarize yourself with how to handle this particular computer setup.

Plan to take your time on these tutorials, and don't worry about how much time you're taking. The 20 to 30 minutes you spend working through the tutorials *before* you begin testing don't count against your time for taking the test. You can even use this free time to organize your scratch paper before you begin the actual timed test. (More on setting up your scratch paper later.)

What Is It Like to Take a Computer-Based GRE?

You sit in a carrel in a computer lab or testing center, facing a computer screen. You may be alone in the room, or other

test-takers may be taking tests in nearby carrels. With your mouse, you click on an icon to start your test. A question appears on screen. You answer it, clicking on the oval next to your answer choice. Satisfied with your answer, you click on a box marked Confirm, to indicate you have no second thoughts about your choice. Then, ready to move on, you click on the box marked Next. A new question appears on screen, and you go through the process again.

This is what it is like to take a computerized GRE. At the end of the first section, you are given a one-minute break. After finishing the second section, you have a ten-minute break. The third section may include another one-minute break. (This is the most likely scenario; it's possible you may be instructed to answer a fourth experimental section.)

How Does Taking a Computer-Based Test Differ from Taking a Pencil-and-Paper Test?

On a pencil-and-paper standardized test, within any given section of your test booklet you are free to skip from question to question and to answer questions in any order you choose. If you do better on antonyms than on reading comprehension questions, for example, you can temporarily skip the time-consuming reading passages and go straight to the antonyms. Likewise, if you have second thoughts about a particular answer choice, on a pencil-and-paper test you can go back to the question, erase your original pencil mark, and select a different answer choice. You are also free to write in your test booklet, crossing out incorrect answer choices, underlining key words, and highlighting questions you need to reconsider.

On a computer-based test (CBT), there is no test booklet. Your test questions appear, one at a time, on your computer screen. You must answer the question currently on the screen and confirm that you are sure of your answer choice before you can move on to the next question. Once you have confirmed your answer choice and moved on, you cannot go back and change it.

In addition, on the CBT, questions are not arranged in groups according to question type: two analogy questions may follow two antonyms; they may in turn be followed by a single sentence completion. You cannot predict what type of question will come up next.

Why Do Some People Call the Computer-Based General Test a CAT?

CAT stands for Computer-Adaptive Test. What does this mean?

When you take a pencil-and-paper test, the questions in the test booklet you receive are basically the same as the questions printed in every other booklet distributed to test-takers on that day. When you take a computer-based GRE

General Test, however, the questions you face on screen are likely to differ markedly from those that come up on the screens of the test-takers in the carrels next to you.

Why will your test be different from someone else's test? Because the CBT GRE is a computer-adaptive test. The test adapts to your skill level: it is customized.

How does this work? The computer program begins by assuming you are the "average" GRE candidate, an imaginary figure whose score would place him or her precisely in the middle of the entire test-taking population. The computer program contains a pool of some 1,000 questions organized by content, question type, and level of difficulty. From this pool the computer selects a math question of medium difficulty, a question the average GRE candidate (someone who would wind up in the 50th percentile of test-takers with a Quantitative score of 550) would be likely to get correct. If you answer this question correctly, the computer revises its estimate of your eventual score upward and proceeds to give you a slightly harder question, one that a student scoring 600 should get correct. However, if you answer that question incorrectly, the computer again revises its estimate of your eventual score—*downward* this time, and you are presented with an easier question, one that a student scoring 500 might get correct. Thus, as you answer each question, the computer adapts your test, tailoring it to reflect your previous performance. In the process, it fine-tunes its estimate of your skill level, gradually zeroing in on your eventual score.

Can I Tell How Well I'm Doing on the Test from the Questions the Computer Assigns Me?

Don't even try; it never pays to try to second-guess the computer. There's no point in wasting time and energy wondering whether it's feeding you harder questions or easier ones. Let the computer keep track of how well you're doing—you concentrate on answering questions and pacing yourself.

Should I Guess?

Yes, you must! You are not going to know the correct answer to every question on the GRE. That's a given. But you can't just skip a question. In order to move on to the next question, you first *must* answer the question currently on screen, even if you haven't a clue as to what the correct answer might be. So if the question on screen has you stumped, eliminate any obviously incorrect answer choices, and then guess and don't worry whether you've guessed right or wrong. Your job is to get to the next question you *can* answer. Just remember to use the process of elimination to improve your guessing odds.

How Can I Use the Process of Elimination on a Computer-Based GRE?

Even though the current CBT GRE makes no provision for you to cross out incorrect answer choices on screen, you still can eliminate answers you *know* are wrong before guessing which of the remaining answer choices is correct. This is where your scratch paper comes in. During the untimed computer tutorial session, take a few minutes to write out four rough, scratch-paper answer sheets—one for each section. Use these answer sheets as your guessing guides. Before you guess, first cross out any choices on your answer sheet that you are *sure* are wrong. Then choose between the answer choices that are left. You'll increase your chances of coming up with the right answer by making this sort of "educated" guess.

Make use of your scratch paper throughout the test. In the verbal section, jot down key words or phrases from the reading passages. On the mathematics questions, use your scratch paper to draw diagrams and, of course, to do all of your calculations.

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E
15	A	B	C	D	E
16	A	B	C	D	E
17	A	B	C	D	E
18	A	B	C	D	E
19	A	B	C	D	E
20	A	B	C	D	E
21	A	B	C	D	E
22	A	B	C	D	E
23	A	B	C	D	E
24	A	B	C	D	E
25	A	B	C	D	E
26	A	B	C	D	E
27	A	B	C	D	E
28	A	B	C	D	E
29	A	B	C	D	E
30	A	B	C	D	E

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E
15	A	B	C	D	E
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22	A	B	C	D	E
23	A	B	C	D	E
24	A	B	C	D	E
25	A	B	C	D	E
26	A	B	C	D	E
27	A	B	C	D	E
28	A	B	C	D	E
29	A	B	C	D	E
30	A	B	C	D	E

How Can I Determine the Unidentified Experimental Section?

You can't. Do not waste time in the exam room trying to identify the experimental section. If you are presented with extra sections, do your best on all of them. Some claim that most often the last section is the experimental section. Others claim that the section with unusual questions is the one that does not count. Ignore the claims: you have no sure way to tell. If you encounter a series of questions that seem strange to you, do your best. Either these are experimental and will not count, in which case you have no reason to worry about them, or they will count, in which case they probably will seem just as strange and troublesome to your fellow examinees.

When and Where Can I Take the Computer-Based GRE?

You can take the computer-based GRE General Test almost any Monday through Saturday all year round. (Testing centers are closed on Christmas and New Year's Day and other major federal holidays.) Because appointments are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis, you should be sure to register early to get the date you want, especially if that date falls in the highly popular November through January testing period.

The computer-based GRE is administered at a variety of sites: Sylvan Technology Centers, Educational Testing Service (ETS) field offices, university testing centers, and other academic institutions. Test centers are located in all 50 states, in American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and eight provinces of Canada. International test centers also exist: a list of them can be found on-line at www.gre.org or in the *GRE Registration and Information Bulletin*.

How Can I Register to Take the GRE?

If you have a credit card or CBT authorization voucher, you can register for the GRE over the phone. This is by far the fastest way. In the United States, American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Canada, contact the Sylvan Candidate Services Call Center at 1-800-GRE-CALL (1-800-473-2255). You can also register by calling your local test center directly. If you plan to take the GRE when abroad, contact the appropriate international Regional Registration Center, also listed on-line at www.gre.org as well as in the *Registration and Information Bulletin*.

You can also register by mail to take the GRE. Simply complete the Computer-Based Test Authorization Voucher request located in the center of the *Registration and Information Bulletin*. Then mail the completed form and a

check or money order for the appropriate fee (currently \$99 \$125 for test locations outside the United States and U.S. territories) to Graduate Record Examinations, Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6020, Princeton, NJ 08541-6020. You will receive your authorization voucher in two to three weeks and can then call Sylvan Candidate Services to schedule your test date.

Your college counseling office should be able to provide you with a registration form. If a registration form is not available at your school, download one on-line at www.gre.org or request one by mail from Graduate Record Examinations, Educational Testing Service, CN 6000, Princeton, NJ 08541-6000.

How and When Are GRE Scores Reported?

The General Test raw score, the number of correct answers, is converted to a score on a scale of 200 to 800. With no correct answers at all, a student would still have a score of 200. With one or two incorrectly answered questions, a student could still have a score of 800. You receive separate scores (from 200 to 800) on the verbal and quantitative sections. Your score report will include both your scaled scores and your percentile rank indicating the percent of examinees scoring below your scaled scores on the General Test.

Your analytical writing score will be the average of the scores assigned to your essays by two trained readers. These scores are rounded up to the nearest half-point. Your combined analytical writing score can vary from 0 to 6 with 6 the highest score possible.

As soon as you have finished taking the test, the computer will calculate your unofficial scaled scores for the verbal and quantitative sections and display them to you on the screen. Because your essays are sent to trained readers for holistic scoring, you will not receive a score for the analytical writing section on the day of the test. You should receive in the mail an official report containing all three scores approximately three weeks after the test date. (If you have chosen to handwrite your essays, you should allow up to six weeks for the official report to arrive.)

NOTE: Except in the analytical writing sections, every question on the GRE is a multiple-choice question with five choices—except for the quantitative comparisons, which have four choices. In this book, the choices are always labeled A, B, C, D, and E, and these letters are used in the Answer Keys and the explanations. On an actual GRE, these letters never appear on the screen. Rather, each choice is preceded by a blank oval, and you will answer a question by clicking with the mouse on the oval in front of your choice.

GRE Test Format

Verbal Ability

The verbal section consists of 30 questions. These fall into four types: antonyms, analogies, sentence completions, and reading comprehension questions. Your academic success will depend on your verbal abilities, especially your ability to understand scholarly prose and to work with specialized and technical vocabulary.

Here is how the 30-question verbal section generally breaks down:

- 8–10 antonym questions
- 6–8 analogy questions
- 5–7 sentence completion questions
- 6–10 reading comprehension questions (based on two to four passages)

Although the amount of time spent on each type of question varies from person to person, in general, antonyms take the least time, then analogies, then sentence completions, and, finally, reading comprehension questions.

Antonym Questions

The antonym questions are the most straightforward vocabulary questions on the test. You are given a word and must choose, from the five choices that follow it, the best antonym (opposite). Some of these words may be totally unfamiliar to you.

A typical antonym question looks like this:

00:05:10 Verbal Skills 24 of 30

PERFIDY:

- ☐ preciseness
- ☐ magnanimity
- ☐ respect
- ☐ diplomacy
- ☒ faithfulness

Abandon Leave Clock Need Help? Are You Sure? Proceed

The word *perfidy* contains the root *fid*, meaning faith (as in *fidelity*). *Perfidy* means treachery, the betrayal of faith. Its opposite is *faithfulness*, the last choice given.

Even if you do not know the meaning of *perfidy*, if you know its root, you can guess that its antonym must be either a

word meaning faith or loyalty, or a word opposite in meaning to faith, such as treachery or disloyalty. The only answer containing such a word is the final answer choice.

See Chapter 4 for antonym testing tactics and practice exercises that will help you handle these questions, and Chapter 8 for vocabulary and word-part exercises that will help you throughout the verbal section.

Analogy Questions

Like antonyms, analogy questions are vocabulary questions. They test your understanding of the relationships among words and ideas. You are given one pair of words and must choose another pair that is related in the same way. Many relationships are possible. The two terms in the pair can be synonyms; one term can be a cause, the other the effect; one can be a tool, the other the worker who uses the tool.

A typical analogy question looks like this:

00:14:10 Verbal Skills 16 of 30

FLAG : ENERGY::

- ☐ explore : insight
- ☒ falter : determination
- ☐ focus : strength
- ☐ kindle : enthusiasm
- ☐ bore : tedium

Abandon Leave Clock Need Help? Are You Sure? Proceed

When energy flags, it weakens or grows less. Likewise when determination or resolve falters, it weakens or grows less. The correct answer is the second choice.

See Chapter 5 for analogy question tactics and practice exercises that will help you handle these questions.

Sentence Completion Questions

In the sentence completion questions you are asked to choose the best way to complete a sentence from which one or two words have been omitted. These questions test a combination of reading comprehension skills and vocabulary. You must be able to recognize the logic, style, and tone of the sentence so that you will be able to choose the answer that makes sense in context. You must also be able to recognize differences in usage. The sentences cover a wide variety of topics from a number of academic fields. They do not, however, test specific academic knowledge. You may feel more comfortable if you are familiar

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with the topic the sentence is discussing, but you should be able to handle any of the sentences using your knowledge of the English language.

Here is a typical sentence completion question.

00:27:20 Verbal Skills 28 of 30

The medical researchers replied to the charge that their proposed new treatment was _____ by demonstrating that it in fact observed conventional medical practices.

☐ insignificant

☐ untested

☒ unorthodox

☐ expensive

☐ intricate

Abandon Leave Clock Need Help Are You Sure Proceed

The medical researchers defend their new treatment by saying it follows accepted, conventional practices. What,

therefore, must have been the critics' accusation about the treatment? They must have claimed it was unconventional, violating accepted practices. The missing word is the third choice, *unorthodox*.

See Chapter 6 for sentence completion question tactics and practice exercises that will help you handle these questions.

Reading Comprehension Questions

Reading comprehension questions test your ability to understand and interpret what you read. This is probably the most important ability you will need in graduate school and afterward.

Although the passages may encompass any subject matter, you do not need to know anything about the subject discussed in the passage in order to answer the questions on that passage. The purpose of the questions is to test your reading ability, not your knowledge of history, science, literature, or art.

Here is a typical reading comprehension passage and question.

00:07:08 Verbal Skills Test 8 of 30

Questions 8 to 9

Both societies are territorial: they occupy a particular home range, which they defend against intruders. Likewise, both are cooperative:

(40) members organize themselves into working groups that observe a clearly-defined division of labor. In addition, members of both groups can convey to each other a range of basic emotions and personal information: animosity, fright, hunger, rank within a particular caste, and ability to reproduce. Wilson readily concedes that, from a specialist's

(45) perspective, such a likeness may at first appear superficial, even unscientifically glib.

Nonetheless, in this eminent scholar's judgment, "it is out of such deliberate oversimplification that the beginnings of a general theory are made."

Which of the following statements best describes the organization of the author's discussion of the importance of the termite/ macaque comparison in the development of a unified science of sociobiology?

☐ He provides an example of a comparison and then rejects its implications.

☐ He concedes that current data are insufficient and modifies his initial assertion of their importance.

☐ He acknowledges hypothetical objections to the comparison, but concludes by reaffirming its significance.

☐ He cites critical appraisals of the comparison, but refrains from making an appraisal of his own.

☐ He notes an ambiguity in the comparison, but finally concedes its validity.

Abandon Leave Clock Need Help Are You Sure Proceed

The key lines here are the passage's final sentences. Does the author *acknowledge hypothetical objections* to the comparison? Definitely. Does the author conclude by *reaffirming the significance* of the termite/macaque comparison? Clearly he does: he concludes by quoting Wilson (whom he calls an eminent scholar), in doing so giving implicit support to Wilson's assertion that such oversimplified comparisons can provide the basis for an important general theory. The correct answer is the third choice.

See Chapter 7 for reading comprehension tactics and practice exercises that will help you handle these questions.

Quantitative Ability

The quantitative section consists of 28 questions:

- 14 quantitative comparison questions
- 10 discrete quantitative questions (another name for standard multiple-choice questions)
- 4 data interpretation questions

In order to answer these questions, you need to know arithmetic, some very elementary algebra, and a little geometry. Most of this material you learned in elementary and middle school. You do not need to know any advanced mathematics. The questions are intended to determine if you have a basic knowledge of elementary mathematics, and if you have the ability to reason clearly.

If you haven't done any mathematics in a while, go through the math review in this book before attempting the Model Tests, and certainly before registering to take the GRE. If you feel that your math skills are still pretty good, you can try the Diagnostic Test first, and then read only those sections of the math review relating to those topics that gave you trouble.

Quantitative Comparison Questions

Of the 28 mathematics questions on the GRE, half of them (14) are what is known as quantitative comparisons. It is very likely that you have not seen such a question since you were in high school preparing for the SAT I; if you didn't have to take the SAT I, it is possible that you have never even seen a quantitative comparison. Therefore, read these instructions very carefully.

In these questions there are two quantities, one in Column A and one in Column B, and it is your job to compare them. For these problems there are *only four possible answers*:

- The quantity in Column A is greater;
- The quantity in Column B is greater;
- The two quantities are equal; and
- The relationship cannot be determined from the information given.

In this book, these four answer choices will be referred to as A, B, C, and D, respectively. In some of the ques-

tions, information about the quantities being compared is centered above the columns. This information *must* be taken into consideration when comparing the two quantities.

In Chapter 12 you will learn several important strategies for handling quantitative comparisons. For now, let's look at three examples to make sure that you understand the concepts involved.

Column A

$$(3 + 4)^2$$

Column B

$$3^2 + 4^2$$

- Evaluate each column: $(3 + 4)^2 = 7^2 = 49$, whereas $3^2 + 4^2 = 9 + 16 = 25$.
- Since $49 > 25$, the quantity in Column A is greater. The answer is **A**.

Column A

The average (arithmetic mean) of a and b

Column B

8

$$a + b = 16$$

The quantity in Column A is the average of a and b : $\frac{a + b}{2}$. Since we are told that $a + b = 16$, the quantity in Column A is $\frac{a + b}{2} = \frac{16}{2} = 8$. So, the quantities in Columns A and B are equal. The answer is **C**.

NOTE: We cannot determine the value of either a or b ; all we know is that their sum is 16. Perhaps $a = 10$ and $b = 6$, or $a = 0$ and $b = 16$, or $a = -4$ and $b = 20$. *It doesn't matter.* The average of 10 and 6 is 8; the average of 0 and 16 is 8; and the average of -4 and 20 is 8. Since $a + b$ is 16, the average of a and b is 8, *all the time, no matter what.* The answer, therefore, is **C**.

Column A

$$a^3$$

Column B

$$a^2$$

- If $a = 1$, $a^3 = 1$ and $a^2 = 1$. In this case, the quantities in the two columns are equal.
- This means that the answer to this problem *cannot* be A or B. Why?
- The answer can be A (or B) only if the quantity in Column A (or B) is greater *all the time*. But it isn't—not when $a = 1$.
- So, is the answer C? *Maybe.* But for the answer to be C, the quantities would have to be equal *all the time*. Are they?
- No. If $a = 2$, $a^3 = 8$ and $a^2 = 4$, and in this case the two quantities are *not equal*.
- The answer, therefore, is **D**.