

PRACTICING TO TAKE THE

GRE[®]
GENERAL
TEST — No. 8

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GRE BOARD

PRACTICING TO TAKE THE

**GRE[®]
GENERAL
TEST — No. 8**

INCLUDES:

- Three official GRE General Tests administered in 1989-90
- One additional official GRE General Test complete with explanations
- Instructions and answer sheets
- Percent of examinees answering each question correctly

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GRE BOARD



Published by Educational Testing Service
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The Graduate Record Examinations Program offers a General Test measuring developed verbal, quantitative, and analytical abilities and Subject Tests measuring achievement in the following 16 fields:

Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology	Economics Education	Literature in English	Political Science
Biology	Engineering	Mathematics	Psychology
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The tests are administered by Educational Testing Service under policies determined by the Graduate Record Examinations Board, an independent board affiliated with the Association of Graduate Schools and the Council of Graduate Schools.

The Graduate Record Examinations Board has officially made available for purchase two practice books, each containing three General Tests, of which this book is one. The Board has also made available for purchase practice books for 15 of the 16 Subject Tests each containing a full-length test. A practice book is currently not available for the Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology Test. The Subject Test practice books and *Practicing to Take the General Test—No. 7* may be purchased by using the order form on page 303.

Individual booklets describing each test and including sample questions are available free of charge for all 16 Subject Tests. The *GRE Information Bulletin*, is also available free of charge. Copies of the *Bulletin* and the Subject Test Descriptive Booklets may be requested by writing to:

Graduate Record Examinations
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PRACTICING TO TAKE THE GRE® GENERAL TEST

The General Test is intended to measure verbal, quantitative, and analytical skills. Although a brief review will not dramatically change the abilities you have acquired over years, use of this book may help you evaluate your ability level and identify areas for further study before you take the General Test.

This practice book contains the three GRE® General Tests that were given at GRE test centers in October 1989, December 1989, and February 1990 and an additional full-length test with questions, answers, and explanations. The tests are complete except for the single section of trial questions in each test that was not counted in the scoring. The location of the nonscored section varies from test to test. The order of the verbal, quantitative, and analytical abilities sections may vary; therefore, when you take the General Test to earn scores, you may find that these sections are not in the same order as they appear in these tests.

The practice book also contains detailed descriptions of the nine general types of questions used in the General Test and suggested strategies for answering them. Forty-eight sample questions with explanations illustrate these strategies.

On the following pages are suggestions for the use of this practice book. To obtain maximum benefit, try the following:

- Take the first test, score it, and compare your scores with the scores of other people who took the test by referring to the table on page 90.
- Read the practice material on pages 8-43.
- Then work through the test with explanations.
- Take the second test, score it, and compare these scores with your scores on the first test to note your improvement and/or any persistent areas of weakness.
- Review again the sample questions and explanations related to the areas where you have answered questions incorrectly. This will help guide you to further study.
- When you are ready, take the third test. The scores you earn on this test are the best estimate of what your performance might be if you take the General Test under standard conditions in the near future.
- Be sure to observe the time limits for each section.

TEST-TAKING STRATEGY

Your test-taking strategy may affect your scores. In preparing to take the General Test, it is important that you become thoroughly familiar with the directions in the practice tests because they are the same as those in the actual test. You have probably taken tests that contain questions similar to those found in the verbal and quantitative sections of the General Test. The question types found in the analytical section may be less familiar. You are strongly urged to review the directions for these questions and to work through some of the practice questions, particularly if you have not encountered them previously. The same is true for any of the verbal or quantitative question types that are not familiar to you. Research suggests that practicing unfamiliar question types results in improved performance and decreases the likelihood of inaccurately low scores. You should still read the directions for each group of questions carefully during the actual test administration.

Work as rapidly as you can without being careless. Check frequently to make sure you are marking your answers in the appropriate rows on your answer sheet. Since no question carries greater weight than any other, do not waste time pondering individual questions you find extremely difficult or unfamiliar.

You may find it advantageous to go through a section of the General Test a first time quite rapidly, stopping only to answer those questions of which you are confident. Then go back and answer the questions that require greater thought, concluding with the very difficult questions, if you have time.

Your scores on the General Test will be determined by the number of questions for which you select the best answer from the choices given. Questions for which you mark no answer or more than one answer are not counted in scoring. Nothing is subtracted if you answer a question incorrectly. Therefore, to maximize your scores, it is better for you to guess at the answer than not to respond at all.

Some sections of the General Test contain test questions with four response options (A through D). All GRE answer sheets contain response positions for five responses (A through E). If an E response is marked for a four-option question, it will be ignored. That is, an E response for a four-option question is treated the same as no response (omitted).

During the actual administration of the General Test, you may work *only* on the section the supervisor designates and only for the time allowed. You may *not* go back to an earlier section of the test after the supervisor announces, "Please stop work" for that section. The supervisor is authorized to dismiss you from the center for doing so.

PROCEDURES FOR PRACTICING

To get an idea of your performance at this time, before further review, take the first practice test under conditions that simulate those at an actual test administration and evaluate the results.

Allow 30 minutes to complete each section of the test. Work on only one section of the test during each 30-minute time period. Do not go back to a previous section or work on a subsequent section. (If you do so at an actual test administration, you may be dismissed from the test.) Once you have completed the third section of the test, you may take a 10- to 15-minute break.

Do not use books, compasses, rulers, slide rules, calculators, (including watch calculators), pamphlets, protractors, highlighter pens, stereos, or radios with headphones, watch alarms (including those with flashing lights or alarm sounds), dictionaries, keyboards, or paper of any kind, since you will not be permitted to use them at a test center.

When you are ready to begin the test:

- Remove an answer sheet from the back of this book.
- Read the back cover of the test book (page 88) and complete the identification portion of the answer sheet.
- Read the inside back cover of the test book (page 87).
- Note the time and begin testing.

Once you have completed the test, determine your score and evaluate your performance, following the procedures outlined in the following two sections. If you find you are not doing well on any of the question types, review the relevant sample questions and explanations. Once this process is completed, review the full-length test with explanations. The explanations provide a basis for the underlying logic of the correct or best answer choices. Rationales are provided for all possible answer choices for the analytical and verbal tests. For the quantitative tests, the best answer choices are accompanied by solutions or quantitative explanations. When you are ready, take the second test following the same procedures as you did with the first. Repeat the process of scoring and evaluation to determine if your practice proved beneficial. If you still note weaknesses, review again those sample questions and explanations and undertake whatever further study and review you consider necessary. When you are ready to take the third test, again try to simulate actual testing conditions. Take the test, score your answer sheet, and convert the scores. These scores are the best estimate of what your performance might be if you take the General Test in the near future.

Research on the General Test shows that scores often rise by 20 to 30 points as a result of taking the test more than once, although scores of some examinees do decline. The possible significance of this finding is tempered by the observation that repeaters are typically a self-selected group who believe that repeating the test will increase their scores. However, by preparing to take the General Test as suggested here, you may be able to do better than you would if you took the test without any initial preparation.

HOW TO SCORE YOUR PRACTICE TEST

On the page following each test is a list of the correct answers. Match your answer to each question against the answer given in the list, crossing out questions you answered incorrectly or omitted. For test GR90-13, add the number of your correct answers in Sections 3 and 6 to obtain your raw verbal score, in Sections 1 and 4 to obtain your raw quantitative score, and in Sections 2 and 5 to obtain your raw analytical ability score. For test GR90-14, add the number of your correct answers in Sections 1 and 7 to obtain your raw verbal score, in Sections 2 and 5 to obtain your raw quantitative score, and in Sections 3 and 4 to obtain your raw analytical ability score. For GR90-15, add the number of your correct answers in Sections 3 and 5 to obtain your raw verbal score, in Sections 2 and 6 to obtain your raw quantitative score, and in Sections 1 and 4 to obtain your raw analytical ability score. In the conversion table for each test, you will find the scaled scores that correspond to your raw scores on the test. Convert your raw scores to scaled scores.

EVALUATING YOUR PERFORMANCE

To evaluate your performance, you may compare your scaled scores with those of others who have taken the General Test at GRE test centers between October 1, 1986, and September 30, 1989. The score conversion tables on pages 90, 248, and 294 indicate for each scaled score shown, the percentages of examinees who earned lower scores. For example, in the table on page 90, in the percent column next to the verbal ability scaled score 460 is the percent 44. This means that 44 percent of the examinees tested between October 1986 and September 1989 earned verbal ability scores below 460. For each score you earned on this practice test, note the percent of GRE examinees who earned lower scores. This is a reasonable indication of your rank among GRE General Test examinees if you follow the test-taking suggestions in this practice book.

The P+ number to the right of each correct answer is based on the percent of examinees who actually took that edition of the test and answered the question correctly. (This percent, however, has been adjusted so that it is an estimate of the P+ that would have been obtained if all examinees tested between October 1986 and September 1989 had had the opportunity to answer the question.) This information enables you to see how other examinees performed on each question. It can also help identify content areas in which you need more practice and review.

It is important to realize that ability patterns differ for people who have different interests and experience. The second table on page 294 shows you the average scores for people in various categories of intended graduate major fields. You can see that those whose interests lie in the physical sciences, which are highly mathematical, generally have relatively high scores in quantitative ability, whereas those interested in the humanities generally have relatively high verbal

scores. Find the major field category most closely related to your career goal to see how your performance compares with that of others who are striving for similar goals.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have any questions about any of the information in this book, please write to:

Graduate Record Examinations
Educational Testing Service
P.O. Box 6000
Princeton, NJ 08541-6000

TEST PREPARATION MATERIAL

Purpose of the GRE General Test

The GRE General Test measures certain developed verbal, quantitative, and analytical abilities that are important for academic achievement. In doing so, the test necessarily reflects the opportunities and efforts that have contributed to the development of those abilities.

The General Test is only one of several means of evaluating likely success in graduate school. It is not intended to measure inherent intellectual capacity or intelligence. Neither is it intended to measure creativity, motivation, perseverance, or social worth. The test does, however, make it possible to compare students with different backgrounds. A GRE score of 500, for example, has the same meaning whether earned by a student at a small, private liberal arts college or by a student at a large public university.

Because several different forms (or editions) of the test are in active use, all students do not receive exactly the same test edition. However, all editions measure the same skills and meet the same specifications for content and difficulty. The scores from different editions are made comparable to one another by a statistical procedure known as equating. This process makes it possible to assure that all reported scores of a given value denote the same level of developed ability regardless of which edition of the test is taken.

Since students have wide-ranging backgrounds, interests, and skills, the *verbal sections* of the General Test use questions from diverse areas of experience. The areas range from the activities of daily life to broad categories of academic interest such as the sciences, social studies, and the humanities. Knowledge of high school level arithmetic, plane geometry, and algebra provides adequate preparation for the *quantitative sections* of the test. Questions in the

analytical sections measure analytical skills developed in virtually all fields of study. No formal training in logic or methods of analysis is needed to do well in these sections.

How the Test is Developed

The General Test is composed of questions formulated by specialists in various fields. Each question is reviewed by several independent critics and revised if necessary. New questions are pretested in actual tests under standard testing conditions.

Questions appearing in a test for the first time are analyzed for usefulness and weaknesses; they are not used in computing scores. Questions that perform satisfactorily become part of a pool from which a new edition of the General Test will be assembled at a future date. Those that do not perform well are discarded or are rewritten to correct the flaws and tried out again.

When a General Test has been assembled, it is reviewed by other subject matter and test specialists from inside and outside ETS. After any problems raised in these reviews have been resolved, the test goes to a test editor, who may make further suggestions for change. Individual test questions and the test as a whole are reviewed to eliminate language, symbols, or content considered to be potentially offensive or inappropriate for major subgroups of the test-taking population, or serve to perpetuate any negative attitude that may be conveyed to these subgroups.

All reviewers except the editors, copyreaders, and proofreaders must attempt to answer each question without the help of the answer key. Thus, each reviewer “takes the test,” uninfluenced by knowledge of what the question writer or test assembler believed each answer should be. The answer key is certified as official only after the reviewers have agreed independently on the best answer for each question.

The extensive procedure described above has been developed to assure that every question in the General Test is appropriate and useful and that the combination of questions is satisfactory. Even so, the appraisal is not complete until after the new edition has been administered and subjected to a rigorous item analysis to see whether each question yields the expected results.

This analysis may reveal that a question is ambiguous, requires knowledge beyond the scope of the test, or is inappropriate for the total group or a particular subgroup of examinees taking the test. Answers to such a question are not used in computing scores.

Description of the General Test

In this description, several examples of each type of question included in the verbal, quantitative, and analytical measures of the GRE General Test are discussed, and explanations of the correct answers are provided.

Verbal Ability

The verbal ability measure is designed to test one's ability to reason with words in solving problems. Reasoning effectively in a verbal medium depends primarily upon the ability to discern, comprehend, and analyze relationships among words or groups of words and within larger units of discourse such as sentences and written passages. Such factors as knowledge of words and practice in reading will, of course, define the limits within which one can reason using these tools.

The verbal measure consists of four question types: analogies, antonyms, sentence completions, and reading comprehension sets. The examples of verbal questions in this section do not reflect precisely the difficulty range of the verbal measure. A greater number of difficult questions than would be encountered in the test have been included to provide practice in approaching more complex verbal questions.

Analogies

Analogy questions test the ability to recognize relationships among words and the concepts they represent and to recognize when these relationships are parallel. The process of eliminating four incorrect answer choices requires one to formulate and then analyze the relationships linking six pairs of words (the given pair and the five answer choices) and to recognize which answer pair is most nearly analogous to the given pair. Some examples of relationships that might be found in analogy questions are kind, size, contiguity, or degree.

Some approaches that may be helpful in answering analogy questions:

- Before looking at the answer choices, try to establish a precise relationship between the words in the given pair. It is usually helpful to express that relationship in a phrase or sentence; for example, the relationship between the word pair *THRIFTY* : *MISERLY* could be expressed as "to be *miserly* is to be *thrifty* to an excessive degree." Next, look for the answer choice with the pair of words whose relationship is closest to that of the given pair and can be expressed in a similar fashion.
- Occasionally, more than one of the answer choices may seem at first to express a relationship similar to that of the given pair. Go back to the given pair and try to state the relationship more precisely or identify some aspect of the relationship between the given pair of words that is paralleled in only *one* answer choice pair.
- Remember that a single word can have several different meanings. If you are unable to establish a relationship between the given pair or to find a parallel relationship among the answer choice pairs, check to be sure you have not overlooked a possible second meaning for one of the words.
- *Never* decide on the best answer without reading *all* the answer choices. If you do not read all the answer choices, you may miss an answer choice that would have appeared superior to the choice you made or might have prompted you to reevaluate your understanding of the question.

- Practice recognizing and formulating relationships between word pairs. You can do this with the following sample questions and with the analogy questions in the practice test in this booklet.

Directions: In each of the following questions, a related pair of words or phrases is followed by five lettered pairs of words or phrases. Select the lettered pair that best expresses a relationship similar to that expressed in the original pair.

1. COLOR : SPECTRUM :: (A) tone : scale (B) sound : waves
(C) verse : poem (D) dimension : space (E) cell : organism

The relationship between *color* and *spectrum* is not merely that of part to whole, in which case (E) or even (C) might be defended as correct. A *spectrum* is made up of a progressive, graduated series of colors, as a *scale* is of a progressive, graduated sequence of tones. Thus, (A) is correct. Here, the best answer must be selected from a group of fairly close choices.

2. ABDICATION : THRONE :: (A) paradox : argument
(B) competition : match (C) defeat : election
(D) bequest : will (E) resignation : office

The relationship between *abdication* and *throne* is easy to perceive and only the correct answer, (E), expresses a similar relationship. (C) is incorrect because *defeat* is not voluntary, as are *abdication* and *resignation* and because *election*, the process of attaining a particular status, is not parallel to *throne* and *office*.

3. DESICCATE : MOISTURE :: (A) pulverize : dust (B) varnish : deterioration
(C) shatter : shards (D) bend : contents (E) darken : light

To *desiccate* an object is to cause it to dry up by depriving it of *moisture*. Among the answer choices, only (E) has a similar relationship between its two words: to *darken* an object is to make it darker by depriving it of *light*. In the other four choices, the first words, *pulverize*, *varnish*, *shatter*, and *bend*, are parallel to *desiccate* in that they describe actions that alter the condition of an object, but the second word is not something of which an object is deprived as a result of the action the first word describes. In (A) and (C), the second words, *dust* and *shards*, are the results of pulverizing and shattering, respectively. *Deterioration* in (B) may be prevented through varnishing, and *contents* in (D) bears no relationship to bending that resembles the relationship between *desiccate* and *moisture*.

4. HEADLONG : FORETHOUGHT :: (A) barefaced : shame
(B) mealymouthed : talent (C) heartbroken : emotion
(D) levelheaded : resolve (E) singlehanded : ambition

The difficulty of this question probably derives primarily from the complexity of the relationship between *headlong* and *forethought* rather than from any inherent difficulty in the words. Analysis of the relationship between *headlong* and *forethought* reveals the following: an action or behavior that is *headlong* reveals lack of *forethought*. Only answer choice (A) displays the same relationship between its two terms.

Antonyms

Although antonym questions test knowledge of vocabulary more directly than do any of the other verbal question types, the purpose of the antonym questions is to measure not merely the strength of one's vocabulary but also the ability to reason from a given concept to its opposite. Antonyms may require only rather general knowledge of a word or they may require one to make fine distinctions among answer choices. Antonyms are generally confined to nouns, verbs, and adjectives; answer choices may be single words or phrases.

Some approaches that may be helpful in answering antonym questions:

- Remember that you are looking for the word that is the most nearly *opposite* to the given word; you are *not* looking for a synonym. Since many words do not have a precise opposite, you must look for the answer choice that expresses a concept *most nearly* opposite to that of the given word. For this reason, antonym questions are not measures of rote vocabulary knowledge; rather, these questions ask you to evaluate shades of meaning and the interaction of meaning between words.
- In some cases more than one of the answer choices may appear at first to be opposite to the given word. Questions that require you to make fine distinctions among two or more answer choices are best handled by defining more precisely or in greater detail the meaning of the given word.
- It is often useful, in weighing answer choices, to make up a sentence using the given word; if you do not know the precise dictionary meaning of a word but have a general sense of how the word might be used, try to make up a phrase or sentence with the word. Substituting the answer choices in the phrase or sentence and seeing which best "fits," in that it reverses the meaning or tone of the sentence or phrase, may help you determine the best answer.
- Remember that a particular word may have more than one meaning, so if you are unable to find an answer choice that appears opposite to the given word, examine all the words for possible second meanings.
- Use your knowledge of root, prefix, and suffix meanings to help you determine the meanings of words with which you are not entirely familiar.

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.

5. DIFFUSE : (A) concentrate (B) contend (C) imply
(D) pretend (E) rebel

The answer is (A). *Diffuse* means to permit or cause to spread out; only (A) presents an idea that is in any way opposite to *diffuse*.

- 6. COINCIDENCE:** (A) depletion (B) incongruity (C) pessimism
(D) ill fortune (E) lack of ideas

One meaning of *coincidence* is being in harmony or accord; another is corresponding in nature, character, or function. *Incongruity*, the correct answer, means lack of harmony or lack of conformity. Answer choice (D) may seem plausible at first glance since a *coincidence* of events is often a pleasant chance occurrence (“good luck” as opposed to “bad luck”), but careful reflection reveals that a *coincidence* is not necessarily a positive phenomenon.

- 7. MULTIFARIOUS:** (A) deprived of freedom (B) deprived of comfort
(C) lacking space (D) lacking stability (E) lacking diversity

Multifarious means having or occurring in great variety, so the correct answer is (E). Even if one is not entirely familiar with the meaning of *multifarious*, it is possible to use the clue provided by “multi-” to help find the right answer to this question.

- 8. PARSIMONIOUS:** (A) initial (B) vegetative (C) prodigal
(D) affluent (E) impromptu

The answer to this question is (C); *parsimonious* means frugal to the point of stinginess, and *prodigal*, which means extravagant to the point of wastefulness, is the only answer choice opposite in meaning. At first, answer choice (D), *affluent*, may seem plausible in that it may be thought that wealth is an opposite concept to frugality — but it is well known that not all wealthy persons are generous.

Sentence Completions

The purpose of the sentence completion questions is to measure the ability to recognize words or phrases that both logically and stylistically complete the meaning of a sentence. In deciding which of five words or sets of words can best be substituted for blank spaces in a sentence, one must analyze the relationships among the component parts of the incomplete sentence. One must consider each answer choice and decide which completes the sentence in such a way that the sentence has a logically satisfying meaning and can be read as a stylistically integrated whole.

Sentence completion questions provide a context within which to analyze the function of words as they relate to and combine with one another to form a meaningful unit of discourse.

Some approaches that may be helpful in answering sentence completion questions:

- Read the entire sentence carefully before you consider the answer choices; be sure you understand the ideas expressed in the sentence and examine the sentence for possible indications of tone (irony, humor, and the like).

- Before reading the answer choices you may find it helpful to fill in the blanks with a word or words of your own that complete the meaning of the sentence. Then examine the answer choices to see if any of them parallels your own completion of the sentence.
- Pay attention to grammatical clues in the sentence. For example, words like *although* and *nevertheless* indicate that some qualification or opposition is taking place in the sentence, whereas *moreover* implies an intensification or support of some idea in the sentence. Pay attention also to the style of, and choice of words in, the sentence; sometimes determining the best answer depends in whole or in part on considerations of stylistic consistency among the parts of the sentence.
- If a sentence has two blanks, be sure that *both* parts of your answer choice fit logically and stylistically into the sentence. Do not choose an answer on the basis of the fit of the first word alone.
- When you have chosen an answer, read the complete sentence through to check that it has acquired a logically and stylistically satisfying meaning.

Directions: Each sentence below has one or two blanks, each blank indicating that something has been omitted. Beneath the sentence are five lettered words or sets of words. Choose the word or set of words for each blank that *best* fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

9. Early ----- of hearing loss is ----- by the fact that the other senses are able to compensate for moderate amounts of loss, so that people frequently do not know that their hearing is imperfect.

- (A) discovery . . indicated
- (B) development . . prevented
- (C) detection . . complicated
- (D) treatment . . facilitated
- (E) incidence . . corrected

The statement that the other senses compensate for partial loss of hearing indicates that the hearing loss is not *prevented* or *corrected*; therefore, choices (B) and (E) can be eliminated. Furthermore, the ability to compensate for hearing loss certainly does not facilitate the early *treatment* (D) or the early *discovery* (A) of hearing loss. It is reasonable, however, that early *detection* of hearing loss is *complicated* by the ability to compensate for it. The correct answer is (C).

10. The ----- science of seismology has grown just enough so that the first overly bold theories have been -----.

- (A) magnetic . . accepted
- (B) fledgling . . refuted
- (C) revolutionary . . analyzed
- (D) predictive . . protected
- (E) exploratory . . recalled

At first reading, there may appear to be several answer choices that “make sense” when substituted in the blanks of the sentence. (A) and (D) can be dismissed fairly readily when it is seen that *accepted* and *protected* are not compatible with *overly bold* in the sentence. The sentence yielded by (C) is logically more acceptable but not as strong as the sentences yielded by (B) and (E). Of these two latter choices, (B) is superior on stylistic grounds: theories are not *recalled* (E), and *fledgling* (B) reflects the idea of growth present in the sentence.

11. If her characters are still being written about as unfathomable riddles, it is to be attributed more to a human passion for ----- than to dubious complexities of her art.

- (A) **conundrums** (B) **platitudes** (C) **scapegoats**
(D) **euphemisms** (E) **stereotypes**

The answer to this question is (A). While any of the answer choices may be argued to be an object of human passion, only *conundrums* enables the sentence as a whole to acquire a coherent meaning. It is necessary, in choosing an answer, to complete the sentence in such a way as to make clear why the writer’s characters are seen as *unfathomable riddles*. A human penchant for *conundrums*, or puzzling questions whose answers can only be conjectural, will account for this.

Reading Comprehension

The purpose of the reading comprehension questions is to measure the ability to read with understanding, insight, and discrimination. This type of question explores the examinee’s ability to analyze a written passage from several perspectives, including the ability to recognize both explicitly stated elements in the passage and assumptions underlying statements or arguments in the passage as well as the implications of those statements or arguments. Because the written passage upon which reading comprehension questions are based presents a sustained discussion of a particular topic, there is ample context for analyzing a variety of relationships; for example, the function of a word in relation to a larger segment of the passage, the relationships among the various ideas in the passage, or the relation of the author to his or her topic or to the audience.

There are six types of reading comprehension questions. These types focus on (1) the main idea or primary purpose of the passage; (2) information explicitly stated in the passage; (3) information or ideas implied or suggested by the author; (4) possible application of the author’s ideas to other situations; (5) the author’s logic, reasoning, or persuasive techniques; and (6) the tone of the passage or the author’s attitude as it is revealed in the language used.

In each edition of the General Test, there are two relatively long reading comprehension passages, each providing the basis for answering seven or eight questions, and two relatively short passages, each providing the basis for

answering three or four questions. The four passages are drawn from four different subject matter areas: the humanities, the social sciences, the biological sciences, and the physical sciences.

Some approaches that may be helpful in answering reading comprehension questions:

- Since reading passages are drawn from many different disciplines and sources, you should not expect to be familiar with the material in all the passages. However, you should not be discouraged by encountering material with which you are not familiar; questions are to be answered on the basis of the information provided in the passage, and you are not expected to rely on outside knowledge, which you may or may not have, of a particular topic. You may, however, want to save for last a passage that seems particularly difficult or unfamiliar.
- There are different strategies for approaching reading comprehension questions; you must decide which works most effectively for you. You might try different strategies as you do the reading comprehension questions in the practice test in this booklet. Some different strategies are: reading the passage very closely and then proceeding to the questions; skimming the passage, reading quickly through the questions, and then rereading the passage closely; and reading the questions first, then reading the passage closely. You may find that different strategies work better for different kinds of passages; for example, it might be helpful with a difficult or unfamiliar passage to read through the questions first.
- Whatever strategy you choose, you should analyze the passage carefully before answering the questions. As with any kind of close and thoughtful reading, you should be sensitive to clues that will help you understand less explicit aspects of the passage. Try to separate main ideas from supporting ideas or evidence; try also to separate the author's own ideas or attitudes from information he or she is simply presenting. It is important to note transitions from one idea to the next and to examine the relationships among the different ideas or parts of the passage: Are they contrasting? Are they complementary?, for example. You should consider both the points the author makes and the conclusions he or she draws and also how and why those points are made or conclusions drawn.
- You may find it helpful to underline or mark key parts of the passage. For example, you might underline main ideas or important arguments or you might circle transitional words that will help you map the logical structure of the passage (*although, nevertheless, correspondingly*, and the like) or descriptive words that will help you identify the author's attitude toward a particular idea or person.
- Read each question carefully and be certain that you understand exactly what is being asked.