

Taking an Objective Test

An objective test is one where the grader's opinions and values are not a factor. Your job on an objective exam is to choose the best answer from those listed. You need to recall or recognize words, facts, or names. Unfortunately, not all test questions are well written and you may be forced to guess at what the instructor or evaluator wants. Critical reading and thinking skills are important when taking objective tests.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Read the directions carefully.
2. Answer each question in your mind before reading the possible answers. This will help eliminate the possibility of being confused by the choices.
3. Then, be sure to read all the possible answers, especially when the first answer is correct. Underline any *negatives* or the word *except*.
4. Eliminate obvious wrong answers. Look for choices that would make a grammar error and eliminate.
5. Mark questions you cannot answer immediately and come back to them if you have time.
6. If you have no clue what the answer might be, use the following guessing strategies (if there is no penalty for guessing):
 - a. If two of the answers are similar, except for one or two words, choose the more reasonable answer of the two.
 - b. If two answers have the opposite meaning, choose one of these answers.
 - c. If two of the answers have similar-sounding or looking words (i.e. intermediate, intermittent), choose one of them.
 - d. If two of the answers have quantities that are almost the same, choose one of them.
 - e. If one of the answers is longer and/or more complete than the others, choose it.
 - f. If one of the answers in the middle also has the most words, choose it.
 - g. Answers with qualifiers such as *generally*, *probably*, *most*, *often*, *some*, *sometimes*, and *usually* are frequently correct.

True/False Questions

1. Answer true/false questions quickly. Generally, these questions will not be worth many points individually. Don't invest a lot of time to get 2 points on a 100 point exam.
2. Remember: If ANY part of the statement is FALSE, then the ENTIRE statement is FALSE.
3. Simplify questions with double negatives before determining the answer.
4. Look for qualifiers like *all*, *most*, *sometimes*, *never*, or *rarely*. These often indicate a true statement.
5. Absolute qualifiers like *always* or *never* generally indicate a false statement.

Short Answer/Fill in the Blank Questions

These questions often ask for definitions or short descriptions. Good test preparation really pays off on this type of question. When you have studied to point of overlearning, the answers to these questions come to mind practically faster than you can write.

1. Read the question so that you can actually hear what is asked.
2. Most instructors have specific words or phrases in mind when writing short answer questions. Try to use the instructor's exact words when you can.
3. If you cannot think of the exact answer, write down something. Guesses often result in partial credit.
4. If more than one response comes to mind, write them both then erase the one you don't want when you review your test.

Matching

1. First determine if all items will match with none leftover.
2. Read through all the items then quickly complete the ones that you know. This reduces the number of possibilities for the difficult matches and simplifies the process of elimination.
3. If some are unknown, eliminate obvious wrong matches and guess to complete each item.
4. Leave no item blank unless penalized for guessing.

Other useful resources

<http://www.studygs.net/tsttak3.htm>

http://www.waukesha.uwc.edu/sc/skills/tt_multichoice.html

http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/asc/index.gw/Site_ID/46/Page_ID/14561/