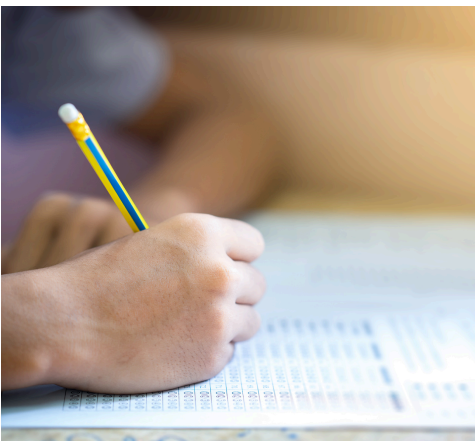


Test Taking Strategies for Multiple Choice Questions

Mastering multiple-choice questions requires more than process of elimination. These questions are designed to show you can apply concepts from the course to new situations. Effective preparation and understanding strategies to approach the questions on test day can help you maximize your performance.



Understanding the Question

The most common mistake students make on multiple-choice exams is misreading the question. To reduce errors when reading the question try this process:

- Cover the answers when reading the question
- Rephrase the question in your own words until you understand it.
- Write down what you know about the subject of the question.
- Now look at the question and eliminate what you know to be incorrect.
- Think about or write down what you know about the remaining answers to find the correct choice.

Choosing Between Two Similar Answers

- When you don't know the correct response, compare each option with the stem and analyze how each is different. One response may have something that others do not have.
- Responses that are more precise or technical are more likely to be correct. However, responses using technical terms not mentioned in the material studied are probably incorrect.
- If unsure, select the response that seems to be more inclusive.
- If you're guessing between two responses, avoid options containing words such as "none," "all," "always," and "never." Choices using "some" or "often" are more likely to be correct.
- Examine opposites carefully: one is definitely incorrect, and one is likely to be correct.
- Explain answers in the margins, especially when you feel like there are two best answers.

Adapted from:
Study Skills and Test-Taking Strategies for Medical Students by Deborah D. Shain Springer-Verlag Publishers
unco.edu. Test-Taking Strategies - Common Questions. www.unco.edu/student-academic-success/academic-success/academic-success-resources/pdf/SAS_test_taking.pdf.

Choosing the Right Answer



Make Predictions

Your mind is most alert immediately after reading and comprehending a question. Use this moment to anticipate the correct answer. If your prediction matches one of the options, you're likely correct. Verify the other choices, but your initial prediction is often accurate.

Answer the Question

Test writers craft convincing incorrect answer options. Avoid selecting an answer solely because it sounds plausible or you believe it to be true. The chosen answer **MUST** directly address the question.

Refrain from selecting answers that are factually correct but irrelevant to the question. After making your selection, revisit the question and your chosen answer. Ensure you haven't misread the question and that your choice provides a valid response.



Use a Benchmark

After reading the first answer choice, assess if it seems correct. If not, move to the next one. If it does, mentally note it as a potential answer. This doesn't guarantee its correctness, but it becomes your initial benchmark.

Evaluate all other choices against this initial benchmark. The initial choice remains the best option until a superior one is found. Once you've determined that no other choice surpasses the benchmark, double-check that it accurately answers the question before making your final selection.

Valid Information

Recognize that all information provided in the question is valid and may be essential for identifying the correct answer. This doesn't always hold true for information presented in the answer choices. These choices are designed to distract you and often include unnecessary details. If the question seems to involve two unrelated topics, don't ignore either one. By first establishing the connection between these topics, you'll be better positioned to select the correct answer.



New Information

Correct answer choices will rarely have new information included. If new information is included that doesn't seem to relate to the topic being asked about, then that choice is likely incorrect, even if the rest of the answer is correct.