**Strategies for Completing Multiple-choice Exams**

Begin by following basic strategies for any test:

* Read directions carefully.
* Answer easy questions in each section first.

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| **Parts of Multiple-choice Questions****Sample Multiple-choice Question:**“They whispered into your brain…” is an example of which of the following?A. metaphorB. hyperbole **Choices provided**C. simileD. onomatopoeia**Sample Multiple-choice Stem:** “They whispered into your brain…” is an example ofA. metaphorB. hyperbole C. simileD. onomatopoeia |

**Apply critical thinking** you learned in Module 2 when selecting an appropriate choice.

* Cover the choices, then read the question or stem and think of an answer. Read the choices provided and select the one closest to your answer.
* Read the question or stem with each choice. Treat each choice as a true-false question, and choose the one that is "most true".

**Strategies for Choosing Answers to Difficult Questions**

* **Eliminate choices you know to be incorrect.**

*Example:*

“They whispered into your brain…” is an example of

A. metaphor

B. hyperbole

C. ~~simile~~

D. ~~onomatopoeia~~

* **Eliminate choices that grammatically do not fit with the question.** Choices “A” and “B” don’t work grammatically: *a eye-level angle; a oblique angle.*

*Example:*

The camera angle of this image is a \_\_\_\_\_\_ angle.

A. eye-level

B. oblique

C. high

D. low

* **Eliminate choices that are totally unfamiliar to you** (*unless you did not read all course content!*).
* **"All of the above”** is a strong possibility if you know two of three choices seem correct.
* **Eliminate choices that mean basically the same thing.** Choices “A” and “B” have the same meaning so both cannot be correct.

*Example:*

The camera angle of this image is a/an \_\_\_\_\_\_ angle.

A. canted

B. oblique

C. high

D. low

* **If two choices are opposite, one of them likely is correct.** Choices “B” and “C” have the same meaning so both cannot be correct. Choices “A” and “D” are opposites so one must be correct.

*Example:*

The first paragraph of the article suggests that Suzuki’s outlook for the environment is

 A. negative

 B. undetermined

 C. uncertain

 D. optimistic

* **If two choices seem correct, compare them for differences, then refer to the question to find your best answer.** Questions that use words such as “best”, “strongest”, and “most” have several appropriate answers but one is more obvious than others.

*Example:*

Which of the following lines **best** illustrates the **main idea** of the poem “Candle in the Wind”?

A. “You had the grace to hold yourself / While those around you crawled…”

B. “Like a candle in the wind / never knowing who to cling to / When the rain set in…”

C. “Hollywood created a superstar / And pain was the price you paid…”

D. “Goodbye Norma Jean / from the young man in the 22nd row…”

*Example:*

The **most** important purpose of the first two paragraphs of the article is to

 A. create conflict

 B. develop suspense

 C. provide basic facts

 D. introduce personality traits

 *Example:*

The word “mercy” in the paragraph beginning “It is instead…” is **closest** in meaning to

 A. courage

 B. humanity

 C. selflessness

 D. compassion

* **Use hints from questions you know to answer questions you do not.** The first stem below can be answered by hints in the second stem.

*Example:*

The first paragraph of the article suggests that Suzuki’s outlook for the environment is

 A. negative

 B. undetermined

 C. uncertain

 D. optimistic

*Example:*

 A criticism of Suzuki described in the article is that he tends to

 A. be too angry and offensive in his speeches

 B. not use enough data to support his arguments

 C. be too harsh in his predictions about the environment

 D. overlook the simple solutions to environmental problems

* **Identify a difficult question with a question mark and go to the next**. Before submitting your exam, go back to these questions and choose an answer.
* **As a last resort, guess when you are unsure**. Do not leave any questions blank, unless the test penalizes for incorrect answers.

**Actions to Avoid When Answering Multiple-Choice Questions**

1. Do not select a choice just because you remember reading the information in the course. The material may be interesting, but you have to ensure that it answers the question.

2. Do not pick an answer simply because it “seems” to make sense. Answer from your knowledge of course content, not your general knowledge and logic.

3. Do not dismiss a choice that seems too obvious and simple. Some questions will be very straight forward to you if you prepared well for the exam.

4. Do not think that elaborate terms in a choice must make it the right answer.

5. Do not pick "c" every time you are unsure of the answer. Computer generated tests incorporate a close range (21-26%) of As, Bs, Cs, and Ds.

6. Do not base your answer on a pattern, such as “A, C, D, C, A, C, B, C”, again because computer generated tests may incorporate four or more Bs in a row.