

GRE VERBAL

@america, Dec 10, 2022
With Christine Suwendy



COURSE CALENDAR

12/3: Intro to GRE Verbal:

Close Reading.

(with a deep focus on Reading Comprehension)

12/10: Reading Comprehension:

Question Types

(breakdown of RC question types)

12/17: Intro to **Analytical Writing:**

The Argument Essay and the Issue Essay

(the paragraph structure)

GRE Verbal Breakdown

QUESTION TYPE	ACROSS BOTH SECTIONS	WITHIN ONE SECTION
Reading Comprehension	1 Long passage: 4 questions 5-6 Short passages: 1-2 questions each 2-3 Medium passages: 2-3 questions each 3-4 Critical Reasoning questions (short paragraphs)	5-7 passages of varying lengths with 10-13 questions
Sentence Equivalence	9 questions	4-5 questions
Text Completions	2-4 single-blank TCs 4-6 double-blank TCs 2-4 triple-blank TCs	1-2 single-blank TCs 2-3 double-blank TCs 1-2 triple-blank TCs

Review: Reading Hack #1!

Get used

to the conventions of

ACADEMIC WRITING!

Review: Reading Hack#2!

Close Reading!

(Identify the grammatical subject)

(Identify the author's perspective)

Introducing a Reading Hack #3!

Look for

CLUES IN CONTEXT!

Question Types

Type 1: Text Completion

1. With numerous exciting public works projects in the offing, residents are understandably (i) _____; yet because such prodigious undertakings are inevitably plagued with numerous setbacks, much of the fervor is likely to be (ii) _____ a heavy dose of reality.

Blank (i)

(A) vexed

(B) concerned

(C) agog

Blank (ii)

(D) tempered with

(E) intensified by

(F) precluded by

SKILL 1: IDENTIFY USEFUL INFORMATION

Every Text Completion question contains **clues** that point you to the right answer. The clues in the sentence will always support one and only one of the answer choices. That doesn't mean they need to be obvious! Part of solving Text Completion questions is figuring out what is a clue and what isn't.

Finally, after refusing for a decade, the family patriarch, weakened by age and infirmity, surrendered to the impassioned pleas of his avaricious nieces, and gave his _____ to the risky investment stratagem.

(A) assent

(B) aptitude

(C) disinterest

(D) disapproval

(E) equivocation

SKILL 2: PAY ATTENTION TO TRANSITION WORDS

When first introduced by senior management, the new boss was viewed as a figurehead at best; but after months of watching him shake up the office hierarchy and double productivity, even the most _____ of his employees was astonished at what he was able to accomplish.

- (A) skeptical
- (B) clueless
- (C) fawning
- (D) senior
- (E) resolute

A huge clue here is that the new boss was viewed *as a figurehead at best*: he wasn't seen as an effective leader. However, how does the blank relate to that clue? Does it refer to employees who *didn't* believe in the boss, or employees who *did* believe in him? There's the second skill tested by Text Completion: can you work out, using transition words and other signals in the sentence, how the blank relates to the clues? The right answer to that problem is **skeptical**. The phrase *even the most _____ of his employees was astonished* tells the savvy reader that these employees wouldn't normally be astonished by the boss's accomplishments. The words *when first introduced*, at the beginning of the sentence, also indicate that views of the boss have changed.

SKILL 3: VOCABULARY AS UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT!

The GRE doesn't care whether you can rattle off definitions.

If that was the case, GRE problems would look a lot different! Instead, you want a more subtle kind of vocabulary knowledge: **the kind that comes from reading and understanding words in context.**

That's why it's so important to always use example sentences when you learn vocabulary words, and to look up words to learn how they're actually used.

Since Text Completion asks you to put words in context, knowing the nuances of how vocabulary words are used is critical.

Question Types

Type 2: **Sentence Equivalence**

17. To combat the tension between conquered and conqueror that seems to inevitably spark revolution, the Roman Empire adopted a practice of _____, attempting to make all conquered nations "Romans."
- (A) deterrence
 - (B) integration
 - (C) assimilation
 - (D) hegemony
 - (E) totalitarianism
 - (F) subjugation

Sentence Equivalence: 5 Tips

1. Identify Pairs—But Beware!

You know that the two words you choose have to **create two sentences with approximately the same meaning**. This means that the two words you choose need to be synonyms—**not necessarily close synonyms, but synonyms**.

2. Eliminate “Outlier” Words

Similarly, since you know that the two words you choose have to have at least a somewhat similar meaning, if you find **any words in the list that don’t have any remote matches**, you know that they can’t be the right answer choice. So you can eliminate those.

3. Fill in the Blank Yourself

When you read the sentence, think about **what word(s) you might place in the blank to complete the sentence** in a way that makes sense. Then see if you can identify similar words among your choices.

Sentence Equivalence: 5 Tips

4. Assess Word Positivity/Negativity

You can often tell from the context of the sentence **if a positive or negative word belongs in the blank**. This can help you eliminate words that you know don't have the correct valence, even if you aren't completely sure of the exact definition.

5. Use Signal Words

Certain words, especially transitions, can function as "signal words" in sentence equivalence questions. **They'll tell you something about what purpose different parts of the sentence serve**. This can help you infer what can best go in the blank. For example, if you see a word like "although," you know that you're about to see a caveat or clarification. Words like "furthermore" and "indeed" mean that part of the sentence will offer further support or emphasis. "Instead" and "but" mean you're about to see a counterpoint or different perspective. If you can notice what transitions (and conjunctions like "and" and "but") signal in sentences, you'll have a much easier time telling what words could belong in the blank for sentence completion.

TEST YOUR HIGH-FREQUENCY GRE VOCABULARY

Antecedent

Pedestrian

Preamble

Intercede

Homologous

Antipathy

GRE VOCABULARY HACK 1: ROOT WORDS!

Antecedent - “ante” (before or in front)

Pedestrian - “pedi” or “pede” (foot)

Preamble - “pre” (before or earlier)

Intercede - “inter” (between)

Homologous - “homo” (same)

Antipathy - “anti” (against)

VOCABULARY HACK 2:

Beware of tricky words whose common usage can differ from the word's formal definition!

Word	Sounds like...	Actually means...
Disinterested	Bored	Not biased
Enervate	Make nervous	Drain of energy
Sanguine	Bloody, violent	Optimistic or positive

VOCABULARY HACK 3

Beware of second definitions! Gre vocabulary can be tricky, because many words have double meanings (or even quadruple meanings):

Some examples of these words:

Fell

Pedestrian

Arch

Beg

Hedge

VOCABULARY HACK 4

Beware of words that have *similar* spellings but different meanings

restive/restful

ingenuous/ingenious

endemic/epidemic

deprecate/depreciate

extant/extent

(For a more complete list, see https://msu.edu/~defores1/gre/hom_usg/gre_conf_wrds.htm)

More Text Completion Exercises

24. The director inserted deliberate _____ into the play—for example, Hamlet typed his letters to Ophelia on a laptop.

platitudes

paradigms

neologisms

derivations

anachronisms

25. The ancient tablet presents a true _____: none have been able to decode it.

gem

stanza

quagmire

enigma

incentive

More Sentence Equivalence Exercises

2. James Joyce, the author of many novels, including *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, saw deeply into the hearts of his characters, but, in a life irony as subtle yet piercing as those endured by his characters, he himself could barely _____ text well enough to proof his own galleys.

- see
- feel
- walk
- move
- distinguish
- interpret

3. Emblematic of the slaughter of the First World War, 60,000 British soldiers died for naught on the first day of the battle of the Somme, literally consumed into a stew of blood and _____.

- grief
- gore
- steel
- bullets
- carnage
- anguish

More Tips...

AVOID THE DISTRACTOR, THE WRONG ANSWERS

You have to make sure not to get trapped by the answer choices. Known as 'distractors', wrong answer choices are sneaky. Learn what makes wrong answer choices wrong and right answer choices right. You've got to think like the test makers!

LEARN PACING

YOU ARE ALSO BEING TESTED ON TEST-TAKING SKILLS

All of us have been there—not being able to let go of that difficult question, burning minutes agonizing between (B) and (C). To do well on the test you have to get a sense of pacing, so you don't spend most of your time on just a few questions.

KNOW THE GRE FORMAT

KNOW THE GRE FORMAT AND QUESTION TYPES

The first thing you have to do before you head to the test center is to make the entire GRE format your best friend. This way, you wouldn't have any last minute surprises or shock when you look at the test paper. Instead of frantically reading the instructions for each question type to understand what you need to do, you can sit comfortably and take a few deep breaths, because you already know the format.

The 9 RC Question Types

Familiarize yourself with the types of questions you're asked based on a reading comprehension passage!

READING COMPREHENSION: QUESTION TYPES

Understand that the GRE Reading Comprehension section does not just test for your understanding of the passage's content.

Rather, RC questions test you on:

- ❑ your ability to understand tone (and by default, the author's position)
- ❑ your ability to infer based on the information provided in the text
- ❑ your ability to close-read

RC QUESTION TYPE 1

1. “What is being said” questions

These questions ask the test-taker about the main idea, or the primary argument, of the passage. Ask yourself: what is the argument of this passage, if I were to sum it up in one sentence?

Example: *The passage is primarily concerned with...?*

RC QUESTION TYPE 2

2. Author's tone questions

These are the types of questions asking the test-taker to address the author's perspective, or tone, regarding the issue in question. These can be tricky, because they are not asking what, but rather, how. Ask yourself: what attitude does the author seem to have toward the topic?

Example: *The passage regards the idea of modern artistic activity with...?*

RC QUESTION TYPE 3

3. “Find the fact” questions

These questions often masquerade as requiring reader’s inferences, when they are actually just asking the test-taker to locate a “truth” employed by the author in order to make a point. Look to the passage, it explicitly contains the answer you’re looking for.

Example: *The passage suggests which of the following about the women’s historians mentioned in the third paragraph?*

RC QUESTION TYPE 4

4. Inferential questions

These questions require the test-taker to make an inferential leap, based on observations derived from a synthesized comprehension of passage content. To answer them correctly, you'll need to use content from the passage to extrapolate about content beyond the passage's scope.

Example: *It can be inferred from the passage that the author would agree with which of the following statements?*

RC QUESTION TYPE 5

5. Contextual definition questions

These questions are pretty straightforward, in that they test one's ability to use context clues to work out the meaning of a word. Ask yourself: what other word could you substitute in and retain the sentence's meaning?

Example: *The word “address” appears underlined and in boldface twice in the first sentence of the passage. In the context of the passage as a whole, “address” is closest in meaning to...?*

RC QUESTION TYPE 6

6. Extrapolating questions

These are often regarded as the trickiest type of question on the reading comprehension section of the GRE. For test-takers to score well here, they must be able to isolate the relationship between two passage components and match it with a similar outside circumstance.

Example: *Which of the following describes a situation that is analogous to the situation described in the fourth paragraph?*

RC QUESTION TYPE 7

7. Structure questions

Structure questions address the way in which the passage argument is built. They ask the test-taker to express something about the organization of the information provided.

Example: *Which of the following best describes the structure of the passage?*

RC QUESTION TYPE 8

8. “What if this were true?” questions

These questions require the test-taker to assess the way a new piece of information strengthens or weakens the argument put forward in the passage. The answer choices for these questions are comprised of new facts which, if true, could help or hurt the passage argument. Your job is to choose the one that would do the most serious damage, or provide the best support, to the argument.

Example: *Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument?*

RC QUESTION TYPE 9

9. “Except” questions

These questions ask the test-taker to spot the statement not expressed in the passage from a selection of statements.

Remember, this is not a simple true or false situation—“except” questions aren’t asking you whether a statement is correct, they’re asking you if the information or assertion was contained in the passage itself.

Example: *The passage states that Johnson composed all of the following EXCEPT...?*

Reading Methods

There are 4 methods that can help you to read the Reading Comprehension passages efficiently:

- (1) Skimming
- (2) Read the questions first
- (3) Sum up the piece and pinpoint information (what evidence backs up what argument?)
- (4) Critical reading

Trick: The best method is a combination of all 4! Skim the questions, and then read the passage with varying speeds (very carefully at some parts, very quickly at other parts).

You should be able upon a first read to identify the author's position and the way each paragraph supports the overall movement of the argument.

In John D’Emilio’s essay “Capitalism and Gay Identity,” he argues that the emergence of industrial capitalism led to new opportunities for “free laborers” in the United States, leading to various beneficial changes in social conditions. It is clear that there are two overarching themes emergent from D’Emilio’s argument about the effects of the onset of industrial capitalism:

5 the new abundance of independence, and choice for “free laborers.” He implies throughout that these—
independence and choice—are the distinct new markers of the social conditions resultant from this economic shift.

D’Emilio argues that capitalism empowers laborers as “free” in the sense that they are free to look for jobs and to negotiate contracts and terms of labor. D’Emilio’s critics suggest
that he largely sidesteps the problems that confound free labor ideology and limit the ability of workers to
openly negotiate contracts with employers and to accept or reject the conditions offered. The “contract
10 negotiations” cited as a sign of freedom by D’Emilio are often hardly negotiations at all, but rather highly
exploitative arrangements that workers have little ability to affect. From the first Lowell Girls all the way to
the modern third world garment works
15 described by Enloe’s “Blue Jeans and Bankers,” it is clear that for many—particularly women, minorities, and
immigrants—free labor has hardly been free at all.

Such critics also suggest the D’Emilio misrepresents the historical and continued significance of the
home. The shift from a home-based to an industrial economy—though indeed very drastic—was hardly as
absolute as D’Emilio suggests. Indeed, from nannying, to
20 housekeeping, to even the “home based jobs” described in “Blue Jeans and Bankers,” labor is still a very active
part of the home even today.

In the essay “The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working-Class Perspective,” Davis spends a
great deal of time discussing the continuation of labor in the home in stark contrast to the assertions of
D’Emilio. Where D’Emilio argues that industrial capitalism equated
to freedom from the home, Davis argues that it actually equated to thickening the bars that caged housewives
to the home as productive and reproductive labor split further and more distinctly apart. Davis argues that
25 women “were the losers in a double-sense: as their traditional jobs were usurped by the burgeoning factories,
the entire economy moved away from the home, leaving many women largely bereft of significant economic
roles.”

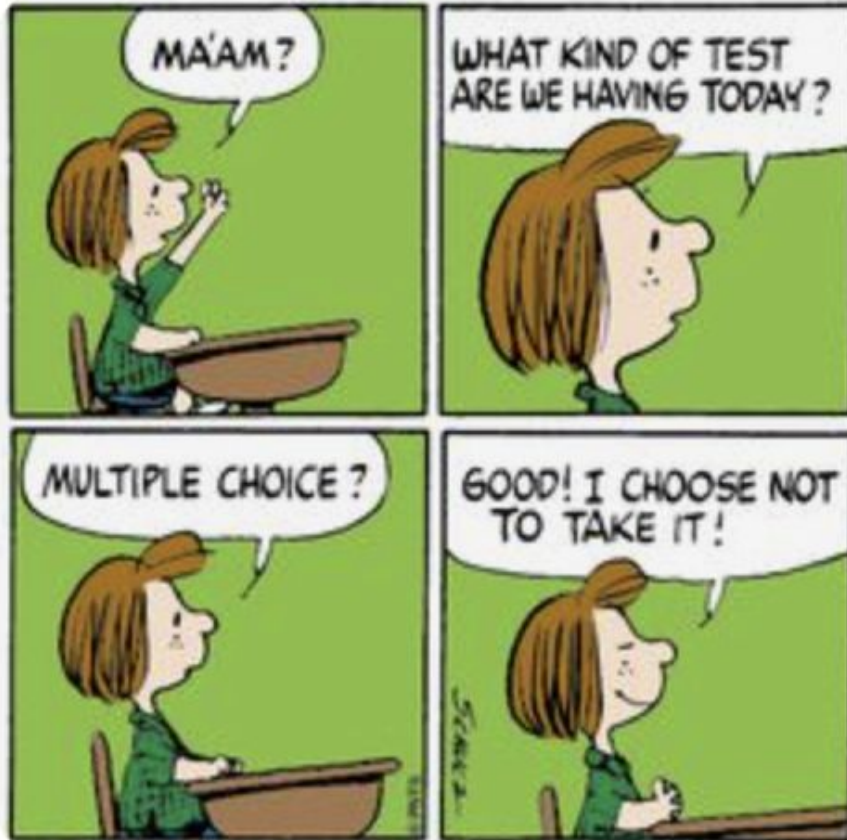
35. The structure of the passage is best described as:
- (A) A theory is described and supported by additional studies.
 - (B) A theory and a screed against it are provided.
 - (C) A theory is presented followed by a collection of opinions that impugn it.
 - (D) A theory is discussed and its author's credentials questioned.
 - (E) A theory is presented and ridiculed.
36. The passage suggests that one argument presented against D'Emilio's theory is based on
- (A) communism
 - (B) identity politics
 - (C) ethnocentrism
 - (D) semantics
 - (E) sexism
37. In the second paragraph, the author mentions the Lowell Girls in order to
- (A) illustrate how industrial capitalism eroded women's economic position
 - (B) challenge an assertion about the importance of home based economies
 - (C) rebut the arguments of D'Emilio's critics
 - (D) favorably contrast their position to that of third world garment workers
 - (E) support an assertion that workers' autonomy is more myth than reality

38. The passage suggests that Davis would be most likely to agree with which of the following?

- (A) Industrial capitalism leads to independence and choice.
- (B) Minorities in particular had little freedom of choice.
- (C) People without economic roles are disadvantaged.
- (D) Home-based jobs still account for a significant percentage of the overall economy.
- (E) Domestic work should be paid.

39. Which of the following would provide the best title for the passage?

- (A) Industrial Capitalism and the Oppression of Labor
- (B) D'Emilio, Enloe, and Davis: A Reconciliation
- (C) A Rejection of D'Emilio's Account of "Free Labor"
- (D) Women's Sacrifices for Industrial Capitalism
- (E) Industrial Capitalism and Freedom For All



**NEXT GRE VERBAL
SESSION @america
on Dec 17!**

→ RC review

→ **Introduction to
Analytical Writing**

Appendix:

Tips on reading strategies!

Read the passage well, and
you will face no problem
answering the questions.

A Little More on Critical Reading

A good reader is able to do the following, all skills tightly related with the requirements of academic analysis:

A good reader...

- reads with a purpose – and the purpose is to answer the questions correctly
- recognizes each paragraph as an integrated whole
- understands how each paragraph fits into the overall passage
- evaluates arguments and supporting evidence

CLOSE READING:

What to Notice



- What words are being used here?
- Are any words repeated in this passage?
- What adjectives are used? What nouns do they describe? How do they alter your understanding of these nouns?
- Are any two (or more) words used in this passage connected in some way?

DICTION

- Is the speaker being straightforward, factual, open?
- Is he or she taking a less direct route toward his or her meaning?
- Does the voice carry any emotion? Or is it detached from its subject?
- Do you hear irony (what is said is different from what is meant)? If so, where?

TONE

- What kinds of words are used (intellectual, elaborate, plain, or vulgar)? Why are words being used in this way?
- Why are sentences long or short? Why might the author be using complicated or simple sentences? What might this type of sentence structure suggest about what the passage is trying to convey?
- Who is the narrator? What is the narrative voice providing these particular descriptions? Why are we given access to the consciousness of these particular characters? Why not others?
- What images do you see in the passage? What might they represent? Is there a common theme?
- Why might the tone of the passage be emotional (or detached)?
- To what purpose might the text employ irony?
- What effect/impact is the author trying to create?

THE PASSAGE'S ARGUMENT
