

Reading Comprehension questions are not Computer Adaptive, but the passages are.

Fact:

The passage and the questions are treated as a single package with its own difficulty level.

When you begin work on a reading comprehension passage the level of difficulty stays the same throughout the four attached questions.

The computer makes score and level of difficulty adjustments in the background during a reading comprehension passage and question package.

These adjustments are reflected in the level of difficulty of the next sentence correction or critical reasoning question.

Directions for Reading Comprehension:

“The questions in this group are based on the content of a passage. After reading the passage, choose the best answer to each question. Answer all questions following the passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in the passage.”

Let’s take a careful look at these directions...

There are clearly two types of question:

1. Stated

Definition: To set forth in words.

Questions based on specific details included in the passage.

2. Implied

Definition: To involve by logical necessity.

Questions based on the story or plot of the passage.

Part 1: Implied Questions

This is usually the first question in a reading comprehension package and there is usually only one question of this type.

Here are some of the more common ways this question can be asked:

- The primary purpose of the passage is to...
- The passage supports which of the following generalizations?
- What is the main idea of the passage?

The question means the same thing whichever way it is asked:

What is the general meaning, purpose, and reason of the passage as a whole.

In order to answer this question correctly you must summarize the passage paragraph by paragraph: a brief story summary of each paragraph needs to be noted on scrap paper.

Strategy:

Ask yourself what happened in each paragraph? The action is important; the details are not. You already have this ability; it's the same skill you use when describing a movie or play to a friend.

Method:

Make a brief note of the action or story line of each paragraph.

Be careful to watch out for the words “but” and “however” in the paragraphs, because they can change the direction of the story and the meaning of a paragraph.

Your note should end up looking something like this:

P1 Scientists develop new theory about...
P2 There was an old theory, but the new one takes that into account.
P3 Support for the new theory.
P4 There are some problems with the new theory, but they can be solved.

Notice how brief the summaries are, and the “buts” that were discovered in the passage. You should now have a manageable passage outline you can use to answer the question. The biggest danger in answering this type of question is to choose an answer that summarizes a single paragraph from the passage.

The correct answer will summarize your outline as a whole.

Part 2: Stated Questions

These are much easier to answer than the implied question. This question asks for some specific information from the passage.

In order to answer this question you need to know two things:

1. The information.

What do they want to know? This is usually easy to understand from the question, however they sometimes put the question in the form of an incomplete sentence:

The scientists use the abs connectors in order to...

You need to change this into a question:

What were the abs connectors used for?

This will ensure you know exactly what information you're trying to get out of the passage.

2. The location of the required information in the passage.

Some of the questions will tell you directly that the information is between line 33 and line 36, however most questions do not give you a line reference. They tell you the location through the use of a key word or words in the question. The key word(s) is a specific reference to a particular section of the passage. Identify the key word and you have your location: *abs connectors*.

Method:

Get the information you need from the specified location. If you are using a key word, you will need to skim the passage for location.

The Stated Exception

This question asks:

Which of the following does not appear in the passage?

Or

All of the following appear in the passage except...

Unfortunately there is no short method of answering this type of stated question. It's like 5 mini questions in one.

Method:

Search the passage and eliminate each answer choice one at a time.

This question type appears on the test to make you read most of the passage, and to use up your valuable time, thus making the particular passage and questions more difficult.