

Read What You Need — Subtype Strategies

The Core Approach (Every Question)

- 1 Read the question
- 2 Identify the type
- 3 Read only what's needed
- 4 Answer in your words
- 5 Find the best match

Central Ideas & Details

Central Idea

QUESTION CUES

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

1. Determine if the passage is **nonfiction** or **fiction**.
 - a. If it's nonfiction, read the **first and last sentences**.
 - b. If it's fiction, read the **whole passage**.
2. State the main idea of the text in **your own words**.
3. Find the answer choice that best matches what you said.
 - a. For nonfiction, eliminate choices with details you didn't read about in the first or last sentence.

Details

QUESTION CUES

According to the text

Based on the text

1. Read the whole question.
2. Restate what **specific** question you need to answer.
3. Determine any **keywords** or **key phrases** from the question.
4. Locate keywords/key phrases in the passage **without reading the passage**.
5. Read the **full sentence** where you found the keyword/key phrase.
6. Answer the question in your own words.
7. Find the answer choice that best matches your answer.

Command of Evidence

Textual Evidence

QUESTION CUES

Which finding, if true, would most directly support/weaken...

Which quotation would best illustrate the student's conclusion?

Which quotation from the described literary work most effectively illustrates the claim?

Which finding about [topic], if true, would most directly support the person's conclusion?

NON-LITERARY PASSAGES

1. Identify what needs to be **supported** or **weakened**.
2. Locate the "partner verb" in the passage (hypothesize, conclude, claim).
3. Predict what kind of information would support/weaken it.
4. Select the answer that best aligns with your prediction.

LITERARY PASSAGES

1. Find the **claim**. Don't confuse it with the description of the work.
2. Predict what kind of description would best illustrate the claim.
3. Look for an answer that captures the **essence** of the claim.
4. Eliminate choices that are too literal, too broad, or unrelated.

Quantitative Evidence

QUESTION CUES

Which choice most effectively uses data from the graph/table...

Which choice best describes data that supports/weaken...

1. Identify what needs to be supported or weakened.
2. Locate the "partner verb" and read the relevant info in the passage.
3. Determine what the **graph** or **table** represents.
4. Find the **relevant data** in the graph or table.
5. Eliminate choices that misinterpret or misuse the data.
6. Select the answer that accurately reflects the data and matches the question's goal.

Key pattern for evidence questions: Always identify the claim first, then look for what supports or weakens it. The "partner verb" (hypothesize, conclude, claim, argue) tells you exactly where to find the claim in the passage.

Cross-Text Connections

Response (How Would Author 2 Respond?)

QUESTION CUES

How would the author of Text 2 most likely respond to...

How would Person (Text 2) respond to the research in Text 1?

1. Read **all** of Text 2 first.
2. Summarize what Text 2 says about the topic.
3. Find and read the **relevant part** of Text 1.
4. Answer the question in your own words.

Agreement (What Do Both Authors Agree On?)

QUESTION CUES

Both authors would most likely agree with which statement?

1. Read Text 1.
2. Summarize what the author of Text 1 thinks.
3. Read Text 2, **looking for points of agreement** with Text 1.
4. Summarize what the author of Text 2 thinks.
5. State the **overlap**.

Inference

Logical Completion

QUESTION CUES

Which choice most logically completes the text?

1. Read the **first sentence**.
2. Read the **last sentence**.
3. If needed, work backward and read more for context.
4. Predict what would logically come next.
5. Choose the answer that best matches your prediction.

Rhetorical Synthesis

Bullet Points

QUESTION CUES

Bullet-point passage format

1. Read the **question** carefully.
2. Figure out **exactly what it's asking** you to do.
3. Choose the answer that directly fulfills the task.

You don't need to read the bullets — just follow the task in the question stem.

Text, Structure, & Purpose

Sentence / Portion Function

QUESTION CUES

Which choice best describes the function of the underlined sentence?

...function of the underlined portion in the text as a whole?

1. Read the underlined portion or sentence.
2. Identify its **function** as clearly as you can.
3. Eliminate choices that don't match that function.
4. Read surrounding text if needed to confirm or refine.
5. Choose the answer that best matches your prediction.

Overall Structure

QUESTION CUES

Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

1. Read each sentence in order, one at a time.
2. Briefly summarize what each sentence **does** (not what it says).
3. Use your summaries to form a prediction.
4. Choose the answer that best matches your prediction.

Main Purpose

QUESTION CUES

Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?

1. Read the **first sentence** (it often reveals the author's goal).
2. Skim the first few words of each remaining sentence to see how the passage unfolds.
3. Stop when you're confident you know what the author is trying to do.
4. Form a prediction about the main purpose.
5. Eliminate choices that are too narrow, too broad, or unrelated.
6. Choose the answer that best matches your prediction.

The golden rule: Always predict your answer *before* looking at the choices. The SAT designs wrong answers to sound appealing — your prediction is your shield against trap answers.