

Types of Critical Analysis Questions

Question Type	What it's asking you	Strategies	Sample Questions
1. Purpose	Explain why the passage/word was written	Reflect; identify tone	<i>The overall purpose of the passage is to... The author mentions ____ to suggest that...</i>
2. Central idea	Thesis statement / conflict in the passage	Skim	<i>Which of the following is the best title for this passage?</i>
3. Secondary idea	Points from individual paragraphs/sentences	Scan (facts, details, examples)	<i>The ____ mentioned in paragraph ____ are those of ...</i>
4. Inference	Draw conclusions based on the ideas	Think of logical implications	<i>With which of the following statements would the author give?</i>
5. Tone	Describe the author's attitude in the text	Find key words/ideas that convey the mood	<i>Paragraph ____ conveys a tone of ...</i>
6. Word or phrase in context	Give the meaning as used in the passage	Re-read the sentence and replace it with the choices	<i>In line ____, the word ____ means...</i>
7. Structure or device	Identify devices used (e.g. simile, metaphor, logic, irony, etc.)	Familiarize	<i>Which of the ff. devices is used in the paragraph?</i>
8. Location	Where you can read the passage (e.g. editorial, business magazine, etc.)	Consider tone (formal or informal, objective or opinionated)	<i>Where would this passage/chart most likely be found?</i>
9. Detail	Facts in the passage (e.g. dates, names, places, etc.)	Scan the passage and look for the question's keywords	<i>When was he born?</i>

Language Proficiency Identification of Errors

What to do

- Look at the non-underlined words first
- Determine common errors
 - Verbs: tenses and S-V agreement
 - Pronoun-antecedent agreement
 - Parallelism

- Double negatives and redundancy (double comparative, etc.)
- Adjective-adverb confusion (ex. bad vs. badly)
- Shifts in collective nouns
- Indefinite pronouns = singular (ex. anybody, each, neither, everyone, etc.)
- **No error? It's okay!**

Other Language Proficiency Tests

Idioms

- Read up on common idioms from good sources
- Notice figures of speech in different written words

Paragraph Completion and Logical Organization

- Scan choices: Know the simple story and topic sentence

Increasing Vocabulary

Divide and Conquer Strategy

- Identify prefixes, suffixes, root words and context clues

Common Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
anti-	against	antonym
bi- / tri-	two, three	bicycle, triathlon
equi-	equal	equilibrium
mis- / non- / un-	wrong, not	mislead, nonstop, unbelievable
trans	across, through	translucent, transient

Common Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
-able / -ible	capable	portable, sensible
-er / -or	one who	actor, skater
-escent	becoming	adolescent
-ish	like	boyish
-ward	in the direction of	backward

Verbal Analogy

- Determine relationship of the first pair immediately
- Eliminate choices with a different pattern/order/relationship
- Choose the closest relationship to the first pair

Kinds of Relationships (Can be found in the Test Survival Kit)

- Synonyms/Antonyms + parts of speech (nouns, adjectives, etc.)
- Cause and effect
- Classification (ex. animal : group of animals)
 - A list of animals and their collective nouns may be found here:
 - <http://www.thealmightyguru.com/Pointless/AnimalGroups.html>
- Object-action