

Test Taking Skills: Educated Guessing

Educated Guessing From A to Z

True / False:

- A. When limiting words are used (all, never, always, must, etc.) false is usually the best answer.
- B. When general terms are used (most, some, usually, could, might, etc.) true is usually the best answer.
- C. Exaggerated or complex answers are generally false.
- D. Answer every question, even with a best guess, as you go. Identify those you're not sure of with a mark. Review these on a second pass.

Essay:

- E. Make a rough outline of your answer before you start to write. Make sure it includes a thesis statement, main points and proof or examples.
- F. Say as much as you can, use short paragraphs, and write legibly. Volume, quality, clarity, and neatness pay off.

Matching:

- G. Ask if one item can be used more than once

Multiple Choice:

- H. When two out of four choices are opposites pick one of those two as the best guess.
- I. B, C, and D answers are best in five answer multiple choice questions.
- J. Avoid pairs. If question 28 is known to be B, avoid guessing B in #27 or #29.
- K. Non-answers ("Zero," and "none of the above") are usually poor guesses.
- L. In questions asking for the most or the least, pick the answer next to the most or least. (Most: 5 8 9 15 30).
- M. "All of the above" is usually a good guess.
- N. The longest multiple choice answers are good guesses.
- O. If two out of four choices are almost identical, pick the longest of the two.
- P. If a few questions have five possible choices instead of four, pick number five.
- Q. If a question asks for a plural (or singular) answer, make sure you pick the plural (or singular).
- R. Try saying the question and answer to yourself. If it sounds wrong grammatically or just sounds silly, it stands a good chance of being wrong.

All Questions:

- S. Never leave a question blank. Give it your best guess. You might guess correctly. And even if you don't, you might get partial credit just for coming close.
- T. Reread directions before turning in an exam. Did you define terms when you were asked to compare them? Use the entire period to double check.
- U. Answers quite often pop up in other questions. Keep that thought in mind.
- V. First impressions (initial guesses) are often best. It's probably your brain at work. Don't fight this intuition unless you're sure it's wrong.
- W. When a question is difficult to visualize, draw it.
- X. Assume a possible answer. Then work backwards to see if you're right.
- Y. Sit in the front of class. Ambiguous questions can be cleared up much easier when you're near the instructor.
- Z. Stay until the very end. Questions may be clarified by the instructor as an afterthought.

Test Taking Tips

1. Read over the whole test before you answer any part of it.
2. Judge the total time allowed and pace yourself.
3. Read over the whole test before you answer any part of it.
4. Don't agonize too much on any one question.
5. Read over the whole test before you answer any part of it.
6. Be sure you are following directions correctly.
7. Read over the whole test before you answer any part of it.
8. If using a separate answer sheet, check to see if you're on the right space.
9. Read over the whole test before you answer any part of it.
10. Go back and review if you have time.