



First Steps

- ♣ Make a preparation schedule
- ♣ Find resources
 - Come to the CTL
 - Borrow from peers
 - Go to your local library

Strategy Approach to Verbal Reasoning

♣ Energy

- Pull your chair close to the table
- Sit up straight
- Place your feet flat on the floor and be alert
- Practice under timed conditions and give 100%

♣ Timing

- Read every passage in the order given
- Attempt every question
- Check your time after you've finished the fifth passage
- Guess at the difficult questions and move on

Tactic Approach to Verbal Reasoning Focus

♣ Take Five Second Break

- Before each passage, take a five second break
- Forget the last passage and all other thoughts
- Sit up straight, concentrate, and focus

♣ Read Every Word

- Don't skim
- Don't write in the margins
- Tests your ability to detect and understand ambiguities, not details
- Concentrate on the main idea
- Don't read the question first
- Don't circle or underline
- Get excited about the topic
- Don't speed read
- Create an image of the author in your mind
- Spend 20 seconds figuring out the main idea before beginning the questions

About Verbal Reasoning

- ♣ 85 minutes
- ♣ 60 multiple choice questions with choices A-D
- ♣ 9 passages and 4-10 questions each
- ♣ 600-word (approximately) passages
- ♣ 15 = top score

♣ Confidence

- Be confident of your score
- Be arrogant when you read
- Assume you have guessed correctly on every answer
- Read critically
- Assume it's the writer's fault that you are confused

♣ Focus

- Focus on the task at hand
- Ignore distractions

How to Study for Verbal Reasoning

- ♣ Take verbal test under time limit and score your answers
- ♣ Take a one-day break
- ♣ Examine the questions and answer choices
- ♣ Take a one-day break
- ♣ Read first passage in same test and write main idea; match your main idea for each question and answer choices; repeat for each passage

Advice about Verbal Reasoning

- ♣ Read all of the questions first and skim over the passages looking for keywords.
- ♣ Read *The Economist* and *The Wall Street Journal*
- ♣ Make notes of the main point of each paragraph
- ♣ Take a 5 second break between passages
- ♣ Get rest to ensure peak performance



Four Tools to Answer Questions

1. Going Back to Parts of the Passage

- ♣ Only when you finish an exam on time
- ♣ Only when you know what you're looking for
- ♣ Only when you know where you can find the answer

2. Main Idea

- ♣ Summary of passage in one or two sentences
- ♣ Reflects author's opinion
- ♣ Emphasize minor topics
- ♣ Questions want to take you away from main idea
- ♣ Construct the main idea in your head (20 seconds)
- ♣ Continue reading until you get to something you do understand
- ♣ Become familiar with the author
- ♣ Don't feel that you need to remember the details of a passage.

3. Question Stems

- ♣ Use this information to answer the questions
- ♣ Some questions you can answer without even reading the passage or answer choices
- ♣ Simplify the question and answer choices

4. Answer Choices

- ♣ Three of the options are *distracters*
- ♣ Five categories of suspected distracters
- ♣ Round-About: moves around the question
- ♣ Beyond: validity relies upon information not in the passage
- ♣ Contrary: contrary to the main idea
- ♣ Simpleton: too simple or easy to verify
- ♣ Unintelligible: don't understand
- ♣ Correct answer = softeners (*most likely, had a tendency to, seemed, etc.*)

About the Writing Sample

- ♣ Two 30-minute periods
- ♣ Take both sides of the argument
- ♣ Give guideline to determine which side is correct in which case
- ♣ 6 (or T) = top score

Advice about Writing Sample

- ♣ Divide your essay into separate paragraphs so the markers know you've completed each task
- ♣ Insert transitional links to unify your essay
- ♣ Use logic to make the first paragraph

Writing Sample Directions

- ♣ Explain the statement with an example
- ♣ Give example contradicting statement
- ♣ Give guideline when statement is true and false
- ♣ Write outline of three steps above
- ♣ Write 2 pages with correct grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and historical examples