

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTION TYPES AND CUES

Inferences - Tests your ability to go beyond what the author explicitly states

- ❖ It can be inferred... The passage suggests ...
- ❖ The author implies that ... The author apparently feels that ...

Supporting Ideas - Tests ability to understand what the author states explicitly

- ❖ According to the author... The author states...
- ❖ According to the passage... ...supported by the passage...

Main Idea - Tests your ability to find the central theme of a passage

- ❖ The main point of this passage is to ...
The passage is primarily concerned with ...
- ❖ The author's primary purpose...
The chief theme of this passage...

Vocab in Context - Test your ability to work out the meaning of words from context

- ❖ As it is used in the passage, the term ... can best be described as ...
- ❖ The phrase ... is used in the passage to mean that ...
- ❖ In the passage, the word ... means ...
The author uses the phrase ... to describe ...

Tone/Attitude - Tests your ability to sense an author's or character's emotional state

- ❖ The author's attitude to the problem can best be described as ...
- ❖ The author's tone in the passage...
The author's presentation is marked by a tone of...

Common Tone & Attitude Terms

Ambivalent - uncertain

Brusque - rude

Cautionary - serving to warn

Disdain - lack of respect
accompanied by
intense dislike

Disparaging - belittling

Esteem - being honored

Flippant - light-minded

Ironic - discrepancy
between what is expected
and what actually occurs

Pedantic - academic

Prosaic - dull

Trite - oft repeated

Whimsical - impulsive

Surviving the Sentence Equivalence & Taking on the Text Completion

Tips and Strategies

1. Before looking at choices, fill the blank with a word of your own that makes sense.
2. Pay close attention to punctuation marks within a sentence. Commas, semicolons (;), colons (:), and dashes signal that the definition or explanation of a missing word is nearby.
3. Look for introductory and transitional words:

Words that signal connections:

- ⇒ Also, in addition to, and, furthermore, likewise etc...
 - ✓ These words indicate that the parts of the sentence will be similar in thought or meaning.

Words that signal contrasts:

- ⇒ But, although, however, yet, even though etc...
 - ✓ These words indicate that the two parts of the sentence will contradict or be in contrast with each other.

Example Sentence leads for Your "Argument Analysis" Essay

INTRO

- "In this argument, the author concludes that _____"
- "The supporting evidence that the author provides for the claim is insufficient, and more substantial evidence is needed in order to validate the claim."
- "This argument presents a series of unsubstantiated claims..."
- "The line of reasoning in this argument is severely flawed...."

ASSUMPTIONS (UNDERLYING) - unstated beliefs that the author must hold
In order to make a particular claim

- "The author has assumed that..."
- "The author apparently feels that..."
- "It is clear that the author believes that..."

COUNTER-EXAMPLES - anything real or imagined that undermines or disproves a statement in the argument

- "Perhaps..." "Maybe..."
- "It is possible that..." "Alternatively,..."

EVIDENCE - an assessment of what is missing and what is needed in order to substantiate the argument

- "In order to substantiate the claim, the author would need to provide..."
- "In order to present a more well-founded argument, the author would have to..."

- **NOTE:** YOUR GOAL IN THIS ESSAY IS **NOT** TO EXPLAIN WHY THE AUTHOR'S CLAIM IS **INCORRECT**, BUT RATHER TO ASSESS WHAT SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IS MISSING AND WHAT WOULD BE NEEDED IN ORDER TO SUBSTANTIATE THE CLAIM AND PRESENT A MORE WELL-FOUNDED ARGUMENT (WERE THE CLAIM TO BE TRUE).

USEFUL VERBIAGE

- Unsubstantiated claim
- Logical fallacy
- Flawed line of reasoning
- Well-founded argument
- Correlation vs. Causation
- Skewed data
- Data collection method
- Interview
- Representative sample
- Accurate data
- Premise
- Undermine
- Contradict

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Conquering the "Analyze an Issue" Essay

INTRODUCTION

- Catchy opening sentence
- Relevant background information pertaining to your discussion of the topic
- **Thesis** - an overall statement of the argument you hope to prove

Body Paragraph 1

- **Claim** - a major point you wish to make within the argument
- **Grounds** - evidence, data, or examples you can use to support your claim
- **Warrant** - Explains how the grounds justify the claim

Body Paragraph 2

- **Claim** - a major point you wish to make within the argument
- **Grounds** - evidence, data, or examples you can use to support your claim
- **Warrant** - Explains how the grounds justify the claim

Conclusion

- Briefly address the counter-argument: For example: "Although some may feel that (**opposing view**), there is far more substantial evidence in support of the contrary (your view)."
- Summarize key points
- Memorable concluding statement that connects your argument to a greater meaningful context.
For example: "If more global corporations implemented sustainable practices, we would be able to ensure the continuity of all life on the planet."