

GRE SENTENCE COMPLETION TIPS

- The verbal section of your GRE will contain five to seven sentence completion questions. Familiarize yourself with the directions, so you need not waste valuable testing time reading directions.
- Sentence completions are among the most crackable items on the entire test.
- As you read each sentence, look for the word or phrase that captures the essence of the meaning of the sentence and thus holds the key to its solution. This is important. When you have found the word or phrase, use it to anticipate ETS's answer *before* you look at the answer choices. Cover the answer choices on the screen, so they won't confuse you. After you think of your own "everyday word," uncover the answer choices and find a synonym for your word.
- Practice on old actual tests so you will recognize what level of difficulty each question on your test is.
- Avoid easy choices that remind you of the question on difficult items.
- Don't eliminate a choice unless you are dictionary-sure of its definition (except on the easy questions).
- When you find that you are unable to anticipate ETS's answer, you may be able to zero in on it by making some general guesses about whether each missing word has a generally positive connotation. You can then eliminate accordingly.
- Two-blank sentence completions are harder than one-blank sentence completions only if you insist on trying to fill both blanks at the same time. Instead, tackle one blank at a time, beginning with the easier one. On medium-difficult and difficult questions, the easier blank is usually the second one.
- Pay careful attention to the sentence-completion trigger words: *but, although (though, even though, while), rather, yet, despite, however, unfortunately, in contrast, heretofore, previously*. These words provide clues to ETS's answer.
- Easy questions have easy answers; hard questions have hard answers.
- When all else fails on the difficult questions, simply select the answer choice containing the hardest words.

GRE SENTENCE COMPLETION STRATEGY: (BASED ON LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY)

EASY QUESTIONS

1. Read the sentence, find the key word or phrase, and anticipate ETS's answer.
2. Don't fret about hard words among the answer choices; easy questions have easy answers.
3. Trust your hunches, but don't get careless.
4. If you feel puzzled, determine whether the missing word is a "good" word or a "bad" word and eliminate accordingly.
5. On two-blank sentences, eliminate careless errors by tackling one blank at a time, the easier one first.
6. Pay attention to trigger words.

MEDIUM QUESTIONS

1. Read the sentence, find the key word or phrase, and anticipate ETS's answer.
2. If you feel puzzled, determine whether the missing word is a "good" word or a "bad" word and eliminate accordingly.
3. On two-blank sentences, tackle one at a time, the easier one first. The easier blank will usually be the second one.
4. Pay attention to trigger words. Use them to find clues to the meaning of the
5. missing word or words.

DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

1. Read the sentence, find the key word or phrase, and anticipate ETS's answer.
2. Don't be tempted by answer choices containing easy words; hard sentence completions have hard answers. Eliminate easy choices that remind you of the question.
3. On two-blank sentences, tackle one blank at a time, the easier one first. The easier blank will almost always be the second one, although it may still be relatively hard.
4. Pay very careful attention to trigger words. Use them to find clues to the meaning of the missing word or words.
5. When all else fails, select the choice that contains the hardest words.

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Student Learning Assistance Center
Texas State University-San Marcos