

The Journey Method: slow, fast, slow

The passage stays in front of you: read for the central idea, not to memorize. Read the title and author line first for the date and style.

- ✓ **First paragraph: slow, like city driving**
 - Probe for the central idea; note any contrast it sets up
 - Expect the rest to repeat and expand it
- ✓ **Middle paragraphs: faster, the open road**
 - Read each topic sentence; skim the rest
 - Stop at contrast words (*but, however, yet*) and connectors (*therefore, thus*)
 - Track tone: what does the author praise or criticize?
- ✓ **Last paragraph: slow again**
 - Confirm or correct the central idea
 - Summarize it in your own words

Answering the questions

- ✓ **Answers come from the passage**, not outside knowledge: prove each choice in the text
- ✓ **Contrast words** point to what questions ask about
- ✓ **Eliminate extreme wording** (*entirely, always*); the right answer is usually measured
- ✓ **Tone first**: decide whether the attitude is positive or negative, then choose its strength
- ✓ **“NOT” and “EXCEPT”**: circle them before you look at the choices

Analogies

- ✓ The last 2 questions on each passage:
 $A : B :: C : D$ reads “*A* is to *B* as *C* is to *D*”
- ✓ Name the relationship in the passage first, in a sentence, then find the choice with the same one
- ✓ *Maggots : cheese* is a creature and the place it grows, so *termites : wood*, not parent and young

Philosophy/Religion

- ✓ One author arguing a thesis, often from an older source
- ✓ Find the thesis early; follow the steps of the argument
- ✓ **If the author raises a question**, look for how the author answers it
- ✓ **Syllogism**: major premise (all men are mortal), minor premise (Socrates is a man), conclusion (Socrates is mortal)

Science

- ✓ Technical and narrow; often modern: most practice passages are 21st century
- ✓ Track the indicator words: *for example, first, finally, indeed*, and above all *but* and *yet*
- ✓ Keep to the author’s view, even where modern science differs

Literature: the three A's

- ✓ Fiction or poetry: no thesis, but still an introduction and a sequence
- ✓ **Actors**: who is who, and who is speaking
- ✓ **Actions**: what happens, in what order
- ✓ **Attitudes**: the tone of the author and of the characters, the A most questions test

Historic/Founding Documents: paired

- ✓ Always last: two shorter passages, usually an ancient source and a founding or historically significant text
- ✓ Each is short: read both closely, with little room to speed up
- ✓ In Passage 2, ask how it relates to Passage 1: shared themes, different purposes