

Multiple Choice Strategies

Consider these techniques to improve your multiple choice abilities

1. Read the stem and anticipate the answer before you look at the multiple choices.
2. Read the stem with every choice.
3. Eliminate answers that are grammatically incorrect.
4. Use the process of elimination.
5. Note qualifying words. Words like usually, often, generally could indicate a true statement.
6. If a word like not, never or none is in the stem, the correct answer must be a fact or absolute. Other alternatives could be true, but incorrect.
7. Note superlatives. Every, all, none, and always indicate answers must be undisputed fact. This is rare in social sciences.
8. The longest response is often the correct one.
9. Look for verbal associations. A response that repeats key words from the stem is likely to be correct.
10. "All of the above" is often the correct response.
11. "None of the above" is often an incorrect response. (This is not as reliable as the all of the above rule—avoid double negatives.)
12. "Funny" responses are usually wrong.
13. When the choices are numbers (dates, times, etc.) the highest and lowest are usually incorrect.
14. If all else fails, choose (b) or (c). Response (a) is typically least likely to be correct.
15. Skip the questions that you are unsure of, and return to them at the end.
16. The most effective approach to studying is to write a multiple choice study guide. (Usually with a study group).
17. Don't "read into" the question— take everything at face value.
18. If you have a good reason to change your answer—change it— otherwise leave it alone.
19. Multiple choice exams require greater familiarity with details, such as specific dates, names and vocabulary.
20. If, after all else, you cannot decide between two choices, choose what "feels" right.

For two of your courses, identify two strategies you will focus on while taking an exam.

Course	Strategy #1	Strategy #2