

Test-Taking Tips for ERBs

General

1. Briefly preview the test section and budget your time.
2. Answer the easiest items first. Skip over difficult items and come back to them. Don't spend a lot of time on questions that have you stumped.
3. Be careful when filling in the bubbles on the answer sheets. Be sure you are in the right section of the sheet and that you are on the right question. This is especially important to note if you have skipped any items!
4. Read each question carefully so you understand what is being asked.
5. Watch out for absolute terms, like *always*, *never*, *must*, *all*, *none*, etc. Also watch out for qualifying terms like *most*, *approximately*, *typical*, *usually*, etc.
6. Read over each possible answer before you choose the one you think is correct.
7. Eliminate answers that you know are incorrect.
8. Don't leave any answers blank. It's OK to guess!
9. Reserve 10% of your time to review and check your answers.
10. Stay relaxed and confident! There is nothing to be nervous about. If you do get anxious, take a few deep breaths and try to relax.
11. Get plenty of sleep the night before, and eat a good breakfast that morning.

Synonyms and Antonyms

1. Make sure you know which the question is asking for: a synonym (a word with a *similar* meaning) or an antonym (a word with the *opposite* meaning).
2. Watch out for look alike words in the answer choices. Sometimes the test tries to fool you with words that look or sounds like either the target word or the correct answer.
3. Also watch out for answer choices that are synonyms when you are looking for antonyms, and antonyms when you are looking for synonyms.

Analogies

1. Figure out what type of relationship the first pair of ideas has.
 - Are they synonyms? (talk:speak as begin:start)
 - Are they antonyms? (old:new as come:go)
 - *Is one an example of, or kind of, the other? (season:summer as tool:hammer) *Note: The order matters here. Hammer:tool would not be a correct analogy with season:summer*
 - *Is one thing a part of the other? (chain:link as ladder:rung)
 - *Does one describe another? (star:bright as clown:funny)
 - *Does one thing do the other? (dog:bark as student:learn)
 - Is each word an example of a common category? (violinist:pianist as soccer:hockey)

In the types of analogies marked with an asterisk (), the *order* of the words matters!

2. Understanding what type of relationship the words in an analogy have to each other will help you to choose the correct answer.

3. Watch out for answer choices that are related to the words in the analogy, but which *don't have the same relationship* or *which are in the wrong order!*

Reading Comprehension

1. Read carefully!
2. Look for keywords, sequence words (like *first, next, then, before, etc.*), and words in *italics* and **bold** print.
3. Watch out for negative words in the questions. For example, *Which of the following is not true?* or *Which of these statement is not supported by the passage?*
4. Think about how the facts and ideas tie together. Think about what the author's overall point is.
5. Read between the lines. Think about what would probably be true if the story were continued or had more detail.
6. When you think you have chosen a correct answer, find the evidence in the passage that supports it.
7. Ask yourself whether a question is a **detail** question or a **main idea** question. Use **key words** to help you find the answer to detail questions. **Scan** a whole story and look for a **topic sentence** to help you answer main idea questions.