Objective Test Strategies

A- TRUE / FALSE TESTS

1. Listen and read carefully. Read the entire question carefully before you answer it. For the question to be true, the entire question must be true. If any part of the statement is false, the entire statement is false.

2. Pay attention to details. Read dates, names, and places carefully. Sometimes the dates are changed around (1494 instead of 1449) or the wording is changed slightly. Any changes like these can change the meaning.

3. Watch for qualifiers. Watch for absolute words such as always, all, never, and every. The question is often false because there are almost always exceptions. If you can think of one exception, then the statement is false. Ask yourself, “Does this statement overstate or understate what I know to be true?”

4. Watch for faulty cause and effect. Two true statements may be connected by a word that implies cause and effect, and this word may make the statement false. For example, temperature is measured on the centigrade scale because water freezes at zero degrees centigrade.

5. Always answer every question. Unless there is a penalty for wrong answers, answer every question. You have a 50 percent chance of being right.

6. Trust your first choice. Often the answer you choose first is right. Don’t change an answer unless you are certain it is wrong. Don’t spend time pondering until you have finished the entire test and have time to spare.

B- MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST

1. Read the question carefully. Are you being asked for the correct answer or the best choice? Is there more than one answer? Preview the test to see if an answer may be included in a statement or question.

2. Rephrase the question. Sometimes it helps to rephrase the question in your own words. You may also want to answer the question yourself before looking at the possible answers.

3. Eliminate choices. Narrow your choices by reading through all of them and eliminating those that you know are incorrect.

4. Go from easy to difficult. Go through the test and complete those questions for which you know the answers. This will give you a feeling of confidence. Don’t use all your time on a few questions.
5. **Watch for combinations.** Read the question carefully and don’t just choose what appears to be the one correct answer. Some questions offer a combination of choices such as, “All of the above” or None of the above.”

6. **Look at sentence structure.** Make sure the grammatical structure of the question agrees with your choice.

**C-MATCHING TEST**

1. **Read carefully.** Read both lists quickly and watch for cues.

2. **Eliminate.** As you match the items you know, cross them out unless the directions mention that an item can be used more than once. Elimination is the key in a matching test.

3. **Look at sentence structure.** Often verbs are matched to verbs. Read the entire sentence. Does it make sense?

4. Find out if each item is used only once or if some are used more than once.

5. Check off answers you have used already.

**D-FILL-IN-THE-BLANK TEST**

1. **Watch for clues.** If the word before the blank is *an*, the word in the blank generally begins with a vowel. If the word before the blank is *a*, the word in the blank generally begins with a consonant.

2. **Count the number of blanks.** The number of blanks often indicates the number of words in an answer.

3. **Watch for the length of the blank.** A longer blank may indicate a longer answer.

4. **Answer the questions you know first.** As with all tests, answer the questions you know first and then go back to those that are more difficult. Rephrase and look for key words.

5. **Answer all questions.** Try never to leave a question unanswered.
Essay Test Strategies

1. **Read All Questions.** Read all the questions through rapidly, jotting down beside each question any pertinent facts or ideas that occur to you. This will give you a good overview of the entire test and help ensure that your answers do not overlap each other.

2. **Plan Your Time.** Estimate the time that you have for each question according to their relative difficulty and importance. Then keep track of time so that you don’t get carried away answering any one question.

3. **Answer the Easiest Questions First.** Answer the easiest questions first and concentrate on answering one question at a time. Getting down to work on something you can handle is the surest way to reduce your anxiety about tests.

4. **Make an Outline.** To ensure good organization and prevent careless omissions, make a brief, logical outline for your answer before you start writing. Remember, it’s not how much you say, but what you say and how well you say it that counts.

5. **Understand the Questions.** Decide what kind of answer each question requires before you begin writing. A different kind of answer is required by such action verbs as “illustrate,” “list,” “define,” “trace,” “compare,” “identify,” or “explain.”

6. **Answer All Parts of the Question.** Sometimes questions may have two or more parts to them. Double check the question when you finish writing your answer to ensure that you have not overlooked part of the prompt.

7. **Get to the Point.** Avoid long-winded introductions. Your aim in answering most essay questions is to provide the largest amount of point-earning information in the time allowed. A long, irrelevant introduction won’t help your score and only wastes your time. Start developing the topic in your first paragraph.

8. **Include Facts.** When appropriate, include factual details to support your answers. Facts demonstrate to your professor that you know what you are talking about.

9. **Be Neat.** Take time to write legibly and make your corrections, if any, as neat as possible. Most professors react favorably to neatness, so let this work for you. Besides, if your writing is unreadable, few professors will waste their time trying to decipher your answer.

10. **Allow Room to Expand.** Leave space between your answers. You may need it for new ideas or additional details that occur later when you return to reread what you have written.

11. **Check Your Work.** Leave enough time to check all your answers for completeness and accuracy of content. Also, make sure that there aren’t any careless mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. You could raise your score simply be correcting an error or adding another fact.