

Chapter 6

**Answer
Smart**

**Thinking Through Test Questions
and Answers**

*“I think now that the great thing is
not so much the formulation of an
answer for myself, for the theater, or
the play—but rather the most accurate
possible statement of the problem.”*

—Arthur Miller

Answering Smart

Having a strategy to answer GED questions is essential. Most questions on the GED exam are multiple choice. You'll need to choose a correct answer based on reading text or looking at pictures, charts, and graphs. That means your reading skills are important. But different reading tasks require different skills. By focusing on developing reading skills to understand questions, passages, and answers, you can score better on the GED exam.

Multiple-choice questions give the test taker an inherent advantage: they do not require precise knowledge to get the correct answer, but rather, the ability to choose the most likely answer or alternative from only four or five choices. This means you can answer most multiple-choice questions without actually knowing the exact knowledge required.

Don't misunderstand this to mean that you don't need to study and prepare for the GED, or that it's an easy test. It is not easy; it is a seven hour exam that only 60% of graduating high school seniors can pass. What the multiple-choice advantage means is that you don't have to spend your time memorizing thousands of facts and details, but can use your time to get basic background knowledge and learn how to apply it to real-life situations.

How to Read a Test Question

The better you understand what the question is asking the easier it is to answer the question. Read each word in the question, and pause a moment to absorb the meaning. The GED test creators designed the questions for clarity. They were not designed to test what you do not know, but rather, to demonstrate how you can interact with the material in the test. The questions are intended to make you think carefully and critically. They are for the most part straightforward and easy to grasp. *The biggest reason for getting the wrong answer is that the reader did not read carefully or did not follow directions.*

Essentially, the question is the key to the answer! By following a few simple guidelines, you can read and understand the test questions on the GED more effectively, and be more likely to find the correct answer. Part of learning to read GED test questions is understanding how they're written, and why they're written that way.

The GED Test Questions Aren't Tricky or Cleverly Worded

The goal of the GED test writers is not to see if you can see through trick questions. The goal is to find out if you can answer straightforward questions that require certain skills. That's why the GED test makers try out their questions on GED test-takers before they use them as real questions. Only questions that aren't too hard or too easy make it into the test. That should eliminate questions that are worded confusingly or rely on tricks. That's why GED test questions should be simple to understand.

The GED does not try to trick you or give you confusing questions. So, read for the most obvious meaning of the question. Your first instinct about what it means is probably the correct one!

Check for Words Like “NOT”

There are some key words that can completely change the meaning of a test question. Take a look at this test question:

Which statement is a fact, not an opinion, supported by the chart of Johnson Brothers’ earnings?

The test writers are actually trying to help you out by putting “not an opinion” in the question to clarify that they’re looking for a fact *as opposed to an opinion*. But, if you’re not reading carefully, your eyes might skip over some of the words and focus on the word “opinion.” If you’re looking for an opinion in the answer choices, you’ll choose wrong. So it’s important to carefully and completely read the test question.

The GED test tries to help you out by sometimes putting the word “NOT” in boldface and all capital letters:

Which of the following is **NOT** a conclusion based on the above passage?

In this question, the word “NOT” completely changes the meaning of the question. If your eyes skip over it, you’ll read “is

a conclusion...” and you’ll be looking for the wrong answer. It’s a good reason to read all the answers to the question before choosing one. If you see more than one answer that seems right, go back and read the question again to make sure you read it correctly.

Another, similar, word to watch out for is “except.” Take a look at this question:

All of the following are examples given by the author, except:

The word “except” shows you that you need to look for the exception—look for the answer that is **NOT** an example given by the author.

Pay Attention to Bold or Underlined Words

The word “NOT” is sometimes highlighted in GED test questions, and other words can be, too. Take a look at the following example:

Which is the **BEST** conclusion based on the sales chart?

The word “BEST” is emphasized because some of the answers *might* be conclusions from the sales chart. You’ll have to read all the answers and decide which one is the best. Which one has the strongest evidence in the chart?

Here's another example:

What conclusion could you come to based only on the sales chart?

This question is similar, but slightly different. The conclusions might be valid, but the question wants the one that uses information *only* from the sales chart. Watch out for answers that might use information from somewhere else! Notice that these words are included because the test writers want to make sure you understand the question. Take advantage of the help!

Look for Key Words

Key words in a question tell you what you're looking for. These words give you important information about what the question is asking for. Look for words like:

- ! *comparison, compare*: to show how two things are similar or different
- ! *conclusion*: an opinion or idea based on facts
- ! *consider*: think about
- ! *decrease, reduce, lessen*: to make smaller or have less
- ! *defend*: to give evidence for
- ! *describe*: to tell about, often restating what's in the reading
- ! *determine, produce*: to cause

- ! *evidence, basis, support*: the facts that support a conclusion, or show it's true
- ! *explain, explanation*: to give a reason for **or** tell what something means
- ! *increase, enlarge, gain*: to make bigger or have more
- ! *influence, affect*: contribute to or partially cause
- ! *most effective, most acceptable, most appropriate*: best
- ! *require*: need
- ! *shift*: change
- ! *similar*: like one another
- ! *suggest, imply, implication*: a conclusion based on the reading, picture, or chart
- ! *summarize*: to give the main idea
- ! *valid, accurate*: correct

Know What Types of Questions You'll Run Into

You'll run into similar types of questions, which use different wordings. Look at the following four questions:

Which statement best summarizes the above chart?

Which statement best expresses the main idea of the passage?

What would be the best title for this passage?

Which of the following statements most accurately describes the information in the chart?

Each question asks you to **summarize a main idea**. One asks for a summary of the information. Another asks about the main idea. The third asks for a title. The fourth asks for a statement that describes the chart. A summary, a main idea, a title, or an overall description of something are all similar. They all give the main ideas or central focus of something. No matter how it's worded, you're looking for a main idea. If you expect questions about

summaries or main ideas, you'll know how to recognize them and what they're asking for.

Here are a couple of additional examples of questions worded different ways, but that ask you to use the same thinking skills:

Skill	Example Questions
Telling facts from opinions	<p>Which of the following is a fact, not an opinion, based on the above table?</p> <p>Which of the following is an opinion based on the information in the passage?</p>
Recognizing facts that support a conclusion or recognizing a conclusion based on facts	<p>Which of the following statements is best supported by the above chart?</p> <p>Which of the following is the best conclusion based on the passage?</p> <p>Which of the following facts provides the best evidence for this conclusion?</p> <p>Which of the following represents the most appropriate conclusion one might draw from this table?</p>

The more you're familiar with the kinds of skills the GED questions require, the better you'll be able to interpret and answer the GED questions.

Answering Multiple-Choice Questions

Once you understand what the question is asking, it's time to choose your answer. Let's take a look at finding the correct answer first, and then we'll go over a strategy for guessing if you're not sure what the answer is.

Answer the question in your head before you look at the answers.

The multiple-choice answers can confuse you if you have not formed a sense of what is being asked before you begin to consider the choices. Sometimes two or three answers will be very close in meaning, and unless you have a good idea of what the answer should be before you look at the choices, you might waste valuable time. Take a few seconds to think about what the answer should be before you start looking at the answers listed in the problem. This may seem like an unnecessary step, but it will save you time in the long run and prevent choosing answers on impulse or having to go back and reread the answers a second or third time.

Look for the answer in the test.

Most of the questions on the GED do not require knowledge outside what is given in the test. The questions require you to think and consider, and then to choose an answer from the information given to you. They don't expect you to know a lot of facts and outside information. When you start looking for the answer, look in the reading, chart, graph, or picture in the GED test booklet. That's where you'll find the answer. The reason is that the GED is testing your skills for finding, understanding, and drawing

conclusions based on information, not being able to recall random facts. So, in general, don't look outside the test question for information. Only look at the information the GED test is giving you.

Eliminate answers you know are wrong.

As you read the answer choices, you will encounter some answers that are obviously wrong. Eliminate those answers. This will help you narrow the choices, and it will make choosing the correct answer easier. The wrong answers won't be interfering. And, if you have to guess, eliminating the wrong answers will make it much easier. Really think it through! You might find that you can eliminate all but one of the answers as wrong, and know that the last answer is correct. So it's possible to find the correct answer without necessarily knowing what it is. After eliminating the wrong answers, you might realize why the remaining answer must be true. Later, we will examine a guessing strategy using elimination to help you maximize your opportunity for selecting the correct answer from your choices.

Go with your first answer.

Statistics from numerous studies have shown that a test taker's first choice is usually the correct one. Your brain told you this was the best answer first, so go with it. Don't go back and change your answer unless you have a very solid reason to do so. Remember, the GED should be a straightforward test. Trust your instincts.

Guessing Strategies

To compensate for the multiple-choice advantage for the test taker, the GED test writers include answers that are designed at first glance to give the appearance of being correct. Following are some strategies that you can use to see through these seemingly “correct” answers and outwit the test writers. As we noted earlier, the most common reason you will miss correct answers on the GED is that you misread either the question itself or text that goes along with the problem, or you simply did not follow directions. So, your first strategy is to read every question and answer very carefully. Give each question and answer your full attention and focus. Read every word and make sure you understand exactly what is written.

You will encounter three possibilities when you approach a multiple-choice question:

1. The first possibility is that you know the correct answer. You read the problem and you can easily pick out the correct answer.
2. The second possibility is that you definitely do not know the answer. You don't have a clue.
3. The third, and most common, possibility is that you are unsure of the answer. You have some idea, but you are not positive one way or the other.

The third type of question can hurt your score the most because you will tend to choose the answer that your hunch tells you is correct, or you'll over-think the question and begin reading into it. These are the most confusing questions to answer, and so you need a solid strategy for answering them correctly. You'll need to think it through.

Another major challenge is deciding if an answer is a #2, where you have no clue, or a #3, where you are unsure but might have a hunch. Hunches can defeat you. The reason hunches are so problematic is that the test writers have written answers that "look correct" but are not. Your "hunch" might just be a correct-seeming answer that's causing you problems. These answers appeal to the hunch-takers because they are in the gray area of sounding "kind of" correct.

Guessing Strategy #1: Kill the Hunch

Here's an easy way to test the correctness of your hunches. Ask yourself if you would bet \$100 on your hunch. One hundred dollars is a lot of money to most people. You will probably not put a \$100 on an answer that is just a hunch, that you are not pretty sure of. The \$100 betting strategy will help you decide if an answer is just a hunch, a guess, or actually based on some knowledge you have about the topic. Your goal is to eliminate the hunches and put the answer into the pure guess category, #2, or the #1 category, where you base your choice on actual knowledge and experience.

When you discover that your hunch is really just a guess, you put the answer into the second group (#2), the questions you do not know the answer to. Now you can take a guess without the influence of the hunch, and your chances of getting a correct answer are much better. The hunch answer was most likely wrong because the test writers put it in the test to make sure it wasn't too easy to come up with the correct answer through elimination. The test writers want to make sure you're thinking clearly, so the "misleading" answers are meant to weed out people who are just guessing. (But you don't need to "just" guess... you can be successful with a good, thoughtful guessing strategy.) By eliminating the foggy hunch answer, you have increased your chance considerably. Now, you can use the law of averages to guess better and show that you're thinking about the answers, even if you don't know them all.

Since you do not have a clue which of the answers is correct, you will want to make a purely random choice. Make a rule that you will follow whenever you encounter a pure guess choice, after you eliminate incorrect answers. An example is taking the last of the choices. Follow that rule in every single case. By the law of averages you will get 30% to 50% of these answers correct. When you follow this strategy you will have improved your guessing average by as much as 60%. This translates to an additional ten to fifteen percent correct answers.

Guessing Strategy #2: Watch Out for Slang

Answers that use slang are generally incorrect. But use a little caution with this rule because the inverse is not always true. Answers that are the most scientific and formal sounding often are correct, but not always. The test writers sometimes write answers that have a formal or scientific feel to them that are incorrect. That's to make the answers "sound" right when they're not really correct.

The strategy of eliminating slang answers is used to eliminate wrong answers, not necessarily to pick correct ones. Answers that use slang words will be wrong more often than not, so eliminating them increases your chances of choosing the correct answer. You may not find many "slang" answers on the GED, but if you do, you'll know what to do with them.

Guessing Strategy #3: Extremes or Absolutes

Watch for words like *always*, *never*, *none*, *all*, *best*, *worst*, or *solely*. These words indicate absolutes or extremes, and correct answers rarely are absolutes or extremes. It's not very often that something is "always" or "never" true. In science, some physical laws are "always" or "never" true. But physical laws often depend on context. The law of gravity is constant, but gravity is different on Earth than on the moon. In general, avoiding "always" or "never" statements is a good idea. Just look at the test questions themselves. They say things like "which is the *most likely*..." or "what is *typically*..." They don't say "which one is *always*..." because there aren't many "alwayeses" in the world. Answers with extreme or absolute words are usually incorrect. Eliminate them from your choices just on principle, even though they may seem correct.

Choose answers that use qualifiers like: *sometimes*, *typically*, *generally*, *may*, *can*, *likely*, *could*, *often*, or *might*. These “sometimes” words show that there are possibilities for exceptions, and the world is full of exceptions! In a guessing situation, choices that use qualifiers will be correct more often than not. They will give you an edge when you do not have a clue.

Guessing Strategy #4: Opposites

If there are two answers that are opposites of each other, one is likely to be correct. This is just common sense in test writing. It takes a lot of time to think up opposites; therefore, the test writer is generally not going to take the time to write opposites for two answers that are not true. Opposites are usually included to catch a test-taker who's not reading carefully or thinking it through well. Watch for them. When you find them, then one of the two opposite answers is likely correct. You are now down to a 50/50 choice. If, by narrowing down your possible answers to two choices, you can put the question in the #1 category, and make an informed guess about which one is correct, that's great! But be sure to apply your \$100 bet, to make sure you're not just using a hunch. If you don't know which answer is correct, the best strategy at this point is to use your rule of thumb, take the second choice, and move on to the next question.

Let's summarize our guessing strategies.

1. First, use the \$100 bet rule to eliminate hunches. Hunches will be incorrect more often than they are correct. If you do not feel like you could bet \$100 on your answer, you will be better

off statistically just taking a guess at it. Your answer should be based on a *logical reason* instead of a hunch.

2. Apply a consistent guessing strategy like always choosing the last of the choices, after eliminating wrong answers. Never deviate from the rule.
3. Eliminate answers that use slang. They will more often be incorrect than correct.
4. Answers that are absolutes are most often incorrect. You can eliminate these answers, too.
5. If a question has answers that are opposites of each other, the correct answer is most likely one of the opposites. If you cannot make an informed choice between your opposites, use your guessing strategy and choose the second answer.

One ? May Help You Answer Another

As you're working through your test, you'll have skipped some questions you didn't know the answer to. A good reason for skipping is that it's possible to run across another question *that clarifies the answer to the first question*. This is more likely to happen on a test in a college class, but it can happen on the GED as well. For example, suppose you skipped the following GED science question:

Oppositely charged objects:

- 1) Attract
- 2) Repel
- 3) May attract or repel
- 4) Do not react
- 5) Attract then repel

Now, if you don't know the answer to this question, you might use the guessing strategies and say that "attract" and "repel" are opposites, so it's probably one of those. But, there's also the word "may" in answer 3. So maybe you're planning to guess between those three. So, you make a note and move on. Later in the test, you find the following question:

A positively charged object attracts an uncharged object. The positively charged object attracts the negative ions in the uncharged object, pulling them closest to the positively charged object, and repels the positive ions, pushing them away.

Which of the following statements must be true, based on the above information?

- 1) Ions don't have a charge until they come into contact with a charged object.
- 2) Negatively charged objects do not attract uncharged objects.
- 3) An uncharged object is made of positively and negatively charged ions.
- 4) A positively charged object attracts positive ions.
- 5) Uncharged objects repel each other.

If you think this one through, the text says that the positively charged object attracts negative ions and repels positive ions in the uncharged object. Even if you don't know what ions are, you know that there are positive and negative ones in the "uncharged object." So, answer 3 is correct.

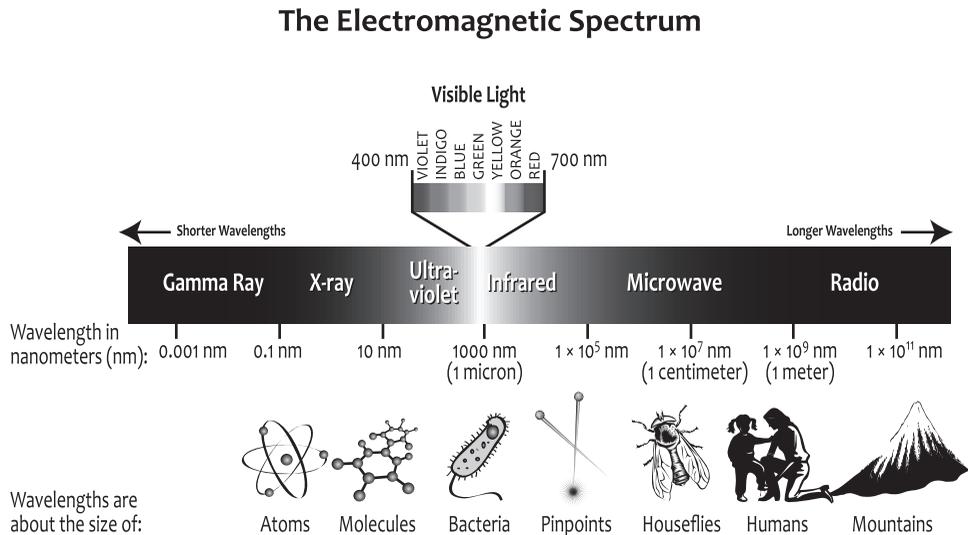
But there's more you can get out of this. If a positive charge attracts a negative charge, that means opposite charges attract. That gives you the answer to the previous question. It's one of the opposites—answer 1.

Now, when you don't know the answer to a question, there's no guarantee that there will be more questions on the same topic later, but if you see any, pay attention to them. They give you additional information that you can use.

Directions: Choose the one best answer to each question.

Science

Questions 1 and 2 refer to the following diagram.



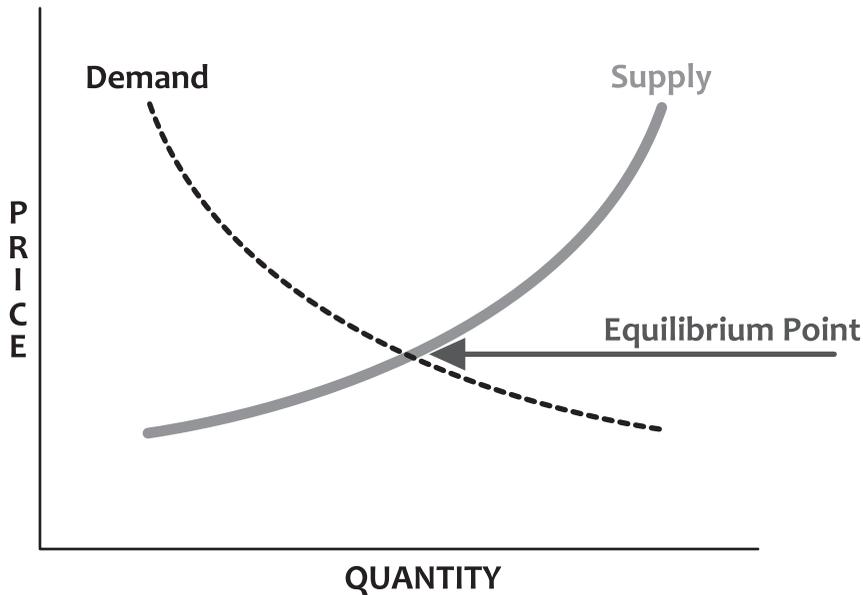
1. Based on the above illustration, most of the electromagnetic spectrum:
 - 1) Is invisible
 - 2) Has short wavelengths
 - 3) Is visible
 - 4) Has wavelengths the size of pinpoints
 - 5) Cannot be measured

2. Which of the following is most likely the wavelength range of yellow light?
- 1) 340–380 nm
 - 2) 420–460 nm
 - 3) 550–590 nm
 - 4) 630–670 nm
 - 5) 780–820 nm

Social Studies

Questions 3 and 4 refer to the following diagram and text.

Supply and Demand



The principle of supply and demand states that in a free market, the price of items will be determined by the supply of those items and the demand for those items. At higher prices,

demand goes down while supply goes up. At lower prices, demand goes up while supply goes down. The market price will be at the equilibrium point between supply and demand.

3. Which of the following situations is most likely to increase the price of the hottest new toy during the Christmas season?
 - 1) The supply is low due to unexpected high demand for the toy.
 - 2) The supply is high due to anticipated high demand for the toy.
 - 3) The demand is low due to anticipated high supply of the toy.
 - 4) The demand is high due to unexpected high supply of the toy.
 - 5) The supply and demand are equal.

4. Which of the following statements best summarizes the principle of supply and demand?
 - 1) The equilibrium point is where supply and demand meet.
 - 2) Supply and demand move in opposite directions.
 - 3) The price and quantity of a product determine its supply.
 - 4) The supply of and demand for a product will determine its price in a free market.
 - 5) At lower prices, demand goes up while supply goes down.

Reading

Questions 5 and 6 refer to the following poem.

WHAT SEEMS GOLD TO THE AUTHOR?**Nothing Gold Can Stay**

- 1 Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
- 5 Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.

Robert Frost, "Nothing Gold Can Stay," 1923

5. In the second line of the poem, the best synonym for the word "hue" is:
- 1) Moment
 - 2) Leaf
 - 3) Feeling
 - 4) Sunrise
 - 5) Color

6. In lines 2 and 7, which literary technique does the author use?
- 1) Apostrophe
 - 2) Alliteration
 - 3) Personification
 - 4) Metaphor
 - 5) Onomatopoeia

Writing

7. **When you decide, on a course of action please notify me.**

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of this sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (1).

- 1) you decide, on a course of action
- 2) you decide on a course of action
- 3) you decide, on a course of action,
- 4) you decide on a course of action,
- 5) you decide on, a course of action

8. **With you're permission, we will finalize the plans for the library tomorrow.**

Which correction should be made to this sentence?

- 1) Remove the comma after permission
- 2) Change you're to your
- 3) Change library to Library
- 4) Change will finalize to have finalized
- 5) No correction is necessary.

Math

9. A square patch of lawn has an area of 36 square feet. How much fencing would be required to completely enclose the lawn?

- 1) 12 feet
- 2) 24 feet
- 3) 30 feet
- 4) 36 feet
- 5) 72 feet

10. How many possible \$9.99 dinner specials can be ordered off the menu below?

You-Choose-It Dinner Specials, \$9.99

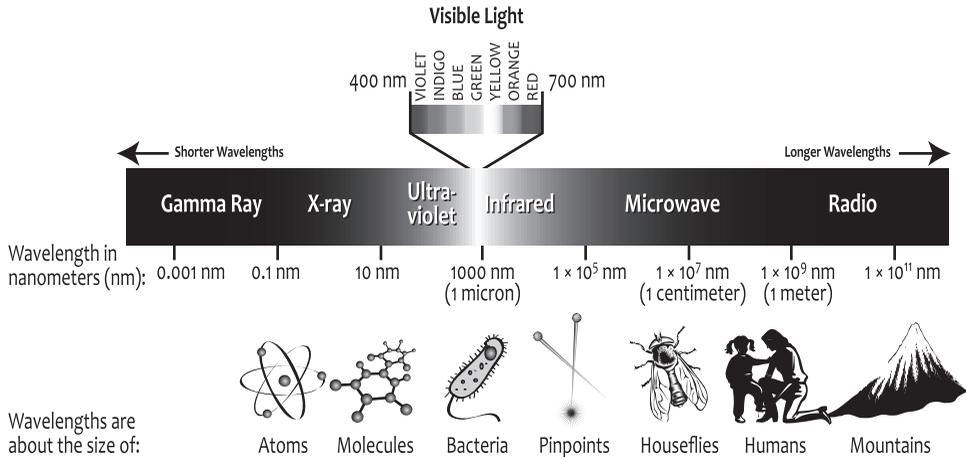
Choose one appetizer, one main course, and one dessert.

Appetizers	Main Courses	Desserts
Buffalo wings	Grilled lemon chicken	Banana split
Quesadillas	Roasted veggie fajitas	Chocolate cake
Nachos	Spicy barbecue ribs	Apple pie
Cheese fingers	Steak and salad	Cherry-cheese pie
<i>Double-up Appetizer for \$1.99 More!</i>	<i>Half-and-Half Main Courses for \$2.49 Extra!</i>	<i>Double-up Dessert for \$1.99 More!</i>

- 1) 12
- 2) 16
- 3) 32
- 4) 48
- 5) 64

Science Question 1

The Electromagnetic Spectrum



1. Based on the above illustration, most of the electromagnetic spectrum:

- 1) Is invisible ← Correct!
- 2) Has short wavelengths
- 3) Is visible
- 4) Has wavelengths the size of pinpoints
- 5) Cannot be measured

When reading this question, it's important to pay attention to the keyword **most**. You want to know what quality applies to the largest part of the electromagnetic spectrum in the picture. Notice that the answer is contained in the picture. The test gives you all the information you need.

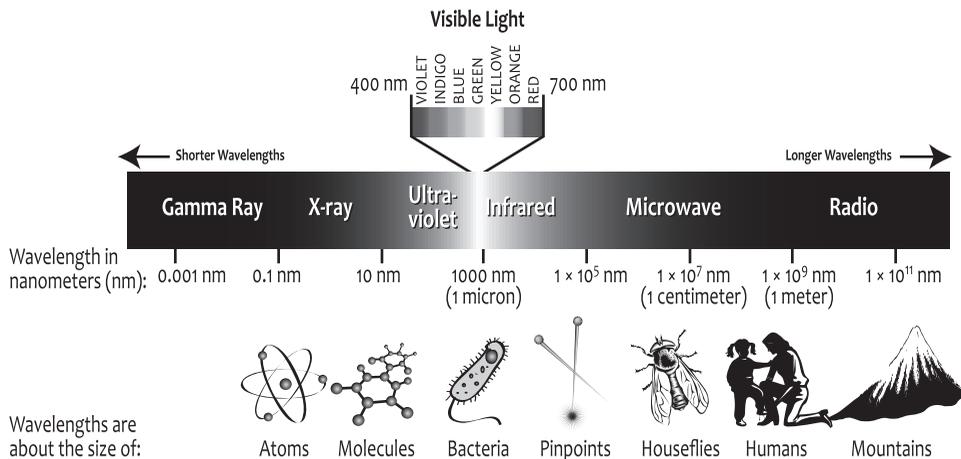
You might be able to answer this question by thinking it through. Looking at the chart, it shows that a small amount

of the electromagnetic spectrum is visible. So, most of the electromagnetic spectrum is *invisible*. The answer is 1.

But if you weren't sure, you can use guessing strategies to narrow it down. First, you might eliminate answer 5, "cannot be measured," because it's an absolute (canNOT). But you can do better than that. The answers contain two opposites, "is invisible" and "is visible." If you narrow it down to those two, you've got a 50/50 chance of being right. Narrowing it down to "is invisible" and "is visible" also may make it easier to pick out the correct answer. You can look at the graph and ask, "Is more of the electromagnetic spectrum *visible* or *invisible*?" You'll likely be able to see that most of it is *not* visible.

Science Question 2

The Electromagnetic Spectrum



2. Which of the following is most likely the wavelength range of yellow light?
- 1) 340–380 nm
 - 2) 420–460 nm
 - 3) 550–590 nm ← Correct!
 - 4) 630–670 nm
 - 5) 780–820 nm

This question asks you to look for yellow light in the diagram, but there's no specific wavelength measurements labeled "yellow light." That makes it a bit harder. So, you'll have to think it through. See if you can eliminate some wrong answers.

Yellow light is visible, since we see the color yellow. So, you can eliminate anything outside of the range of "visible." That means, anything that's not between 400 nm and 700 nm is incorrect. So, you can eliminate answers 1 and 5. If you did that, you've increased your chances of picking the correct answer to 33%, a big increase.

Now, you could think this through even more. The left side (400 nm) of visible wavelengths is labeled "violet." The right side (700 nm) is labeled "red." Yellow isn't at the far right or the far left. It's somewhere in the middle. The colors go: violet, blue, green, yellow, orange, red. So yellow is in the center, but a little closer to red.

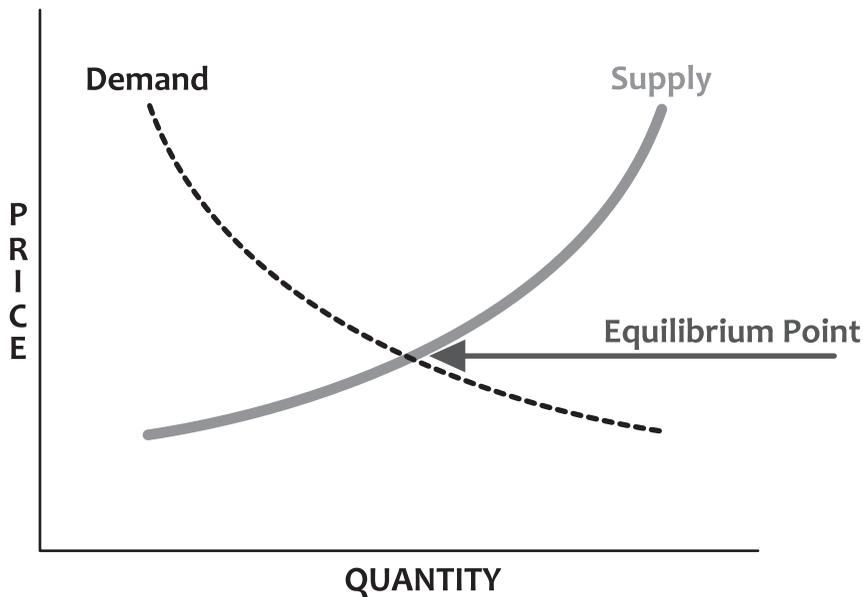
That should eliminate answer 2. Answer 2 is very close to violet, and there needs to be blue and green before you get to yellow.

Now, there's two more answers, a 50/50 chance. Logically, answer 3 is more in the center, so you might realize it's correct. But even if you've narrowed it down this far, you've greatly increased

your chances of guessing correctly! Even if you didn't get your guess right, on a long test, the odds will be with you and will get you a better score.

Social Studies Question 3

Supply and Demand



The principle of supply and demand states that in a free market, the price of items will be determined by the supply of those items and the demand for those items. At higher prices, demand goes down while supply goes up. At lower prices, demand goes up while supply goes down. The market price will be at the equilibrium point between supply and demand.

3. Which of the following situations is most likely to increase the price of the hottest new toy during the Christmas season?

- 1) The supply is low due to unexpected high demand for the toy. *Correct!*
- 2) The supply is high due to anticipated high demand for the toy.
- 3) The demand is low due to anticipated high supply of the toy.
- 4) The demand is high due to unexpected high supply of the toy.
- 5) The supply and demand are equal.

This question contains the keyword *increase*. It asks you which situation will make the price of the toy higher. If you understand the terms “supply,” how much of something there is, and “demand,” how many people want it, your common-sense and experience will help you answer this question. So don’t read too much into it, or over-think the question! What causes the price of a toy to go up?

The first answer says that the supply is low (there are few toys), and the demand is high (lots of people want them). When lots of people want a few toys, the price will go up.

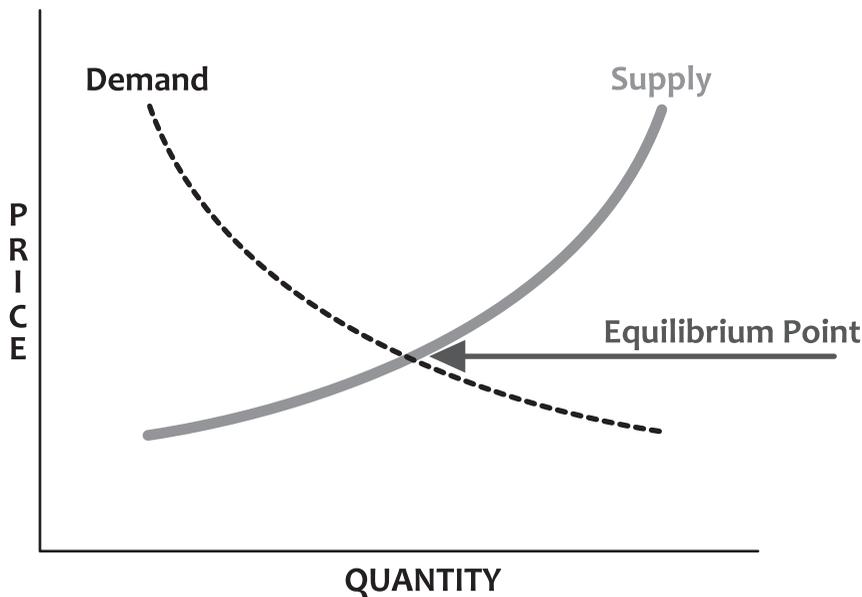
If you find that you need to guess, though, you’re faced with an odd situation. There isn’t just one set of opposites here. There are two! Answers 1, 2, 3, and 4 are all variations of each other, substituting “high” and “low,” “supply” and “demand.” You can probably eliminate answer 5, and that brings your chances of being right up from 20% to 25%...a significant gain.

Could you eliminate any other answers? You might eliminate answer 3 because low demand is unlikely to cause high prices. (If people don't want something, why would they pay a lot for it?) That would give you a 33% shot at the answer.

Now, if you look at the answers carefully, you'll see that answers 2 and 4 both say there's high supply AND high demand. The reason is different, but the conditions are the same. When two answers are so similar, it's unlikely that either of them is right! That could help you narrow it down to answer 1—so you *could* arrive at the correct answer in more than one way.

Social Studies Question 4

Supply and Demand



The principle of supply and demand states that in a free market, the price of items will be determined by the supply of

those items and the demand for those items. At higher prices, demand goes down while supply goes up. At lower prices, demand goes up while supply goes down. The market price will be at the equilibrium point between supply and demand.

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- 1) The equilibrium point is where supply and demand meet.
- 2) Supply and demand move in opposite directions.
- 3) The price and quantity of a product determine its supply.
- 4) The supply of and demand for a product will determine its price in a free market. *Correct!*
- 5) At lower prices, demand goes up while supply goes down.

This question asks for a summary. That is, what's the main idea of supply and demand? Be aware when you answer summary or main idea questions. Watch for answers that just give details. They may say something correct, but they won't be the right answers.

Answer 1 is exactly that kind of answer. It gives a definition of the equilibrium point, but that doesn't really give the main idea of the principle of supply and demand. It's true, but it doesn't sum up the whole idea. You might be able to eliminate this answer with a little thought.

Answer 2 is also true, but it also doesn't tell you what the main idea is of the principle of supply and demand. This one might be easier to eliminate, because it doesn't really give an important point.

You might eliminate answer 3 even easier, because the price and quantity of a product don't determine its supply. It doesn't say that anywhere in the text. Instead, the supply helps determine the price.

Now you've got two answers left. You could eliminate answer 5 because it only talks about lower prices. The principle of supply and demand talks about what happens to prices in general, not just about lower prices.

If you eliminated any of the incorrect answers, then you increased your odds of getting the right answer. Answer 4 is the best answer because it gives the main idea of what supply and demand is about: that supply and demand determine the price of items. Remember, in this type of question, you're looking for the broadest answer that gives the best overall idea of the topic.

Reading Question 5

WHAT SEEMS GOLD TO THE AUTHOR?

Nothing Gold Can Stay

- 1 Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
- 5 Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.

Robert Frost, "Nothing Gold Can Stay," 1923

5. In the second line of the poem, the best synonym for the word “hue” is:

- 1) Moment
- 2) Leaf
- 3) Feeling
- 4) Sunrise
- 5) Color

← Correct!

Here’s a question that might be hard if you don’t know the answer right away. If you know what “hue” means, you’ll immediately see that 5 is the correct answer. But you might not know! This is a common type of question on the reading test, a word definition question.

One good strategy for eliminating wrong answers is putting them in the sentence.

“Nature’s first green is gold, her hardest *moment* to hold.” That sounds like it might be right, so skip that one for now.

“Nature’s first green is gold, her hardest *leaf* to hold.” Well, the word “green” does apply to a leaf. It’s hard to eliminate that one, either.

“Nature’s first green is gold, her hardest *feeling* to hold.” The thing that’s being held refers to what’s “green” and “gold.” So, *feeling* doesn’t make a lot of sense. You can probably eliminate answer 3.

“Nature’s first green is gold, her hardest *sunrise* to hold.” Well, “gold” might apply to a sunrise, but “green” likely wouldn’t. And the sentence doesn’t really sound right. Later on, the poem talks about “dawn,” but it doesn’t really seem to apply very well here. You can probably eliminate answer 4. If you’ve eliminated two answers, you’ve got your chances up to 33%, pretty good odds.

“Nature’s first green is gold, her hardest *color* to hold.” That’s the last answer. It’s the most dead-on because “hue” is talking about what’s “green” and “gold.” Obviously, those are colors. And going with what’s most obvious is usually best! So, you might go with this answer after thinking it through, even if you don’t know the word “hue.” But even if you didn’t, you should be able to eliminate a couple of wrong answers!

Reading Question 6

WHAT SEEMS GOLD TO THE AUTHOR?

Nothing Gold Can Stay

- 1 Nature’s first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf’s a flower;
But only so an hour.
- 5 Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.

Robert Frost, “Nothing Gold Can Stay,” 1923

6. In lines 2 and 7, which literary technique does the author use?

- 1) Apostrophe
- 2) Alliteration ← Correct!
- 3) Personification
- 4) Metaphor
- 5) Onomatopoeia

This question is actually more difficult than most GED reading questions, because it requires that you know some literature terms. The GED doesn't test you on literary terms, but you might still find yourself up against some vocabulary words you don't know. If you know the answer, that's great. If not, you still might be able to eliminate some answers before guessing.

You might be tempted to eliminate “apostrophe” because it's a kind of punctuation. But the word “apostrophe” also has a different meaning as a literary term. If you eliminated it, that's okay. You've got to go with what you know. But remember, the GED test writers try to make their answers sound right. You might assume that “apostrophe” is a kind of literary technique you don't know. Actually, “apostrophe” means talking to some idea, force, or character directly. An example would be if the poem said, “Oh, Nature, you cannot hold the color gold!” That's talking directly to Nature.

Check for terms that you know. You're most likely to know “personification” and “metaphor.” If you know that “metaphor” means calling something some other thing (like saying, “Her early leaf's a flower,” which calls the leaf a “flower”), then you'll see that there isn't a metaphor in lines 2 or 7. You can eliminate answer 4.

You might be thrown by “personification,” though. “Personification” means treating something that’s not a person (like nature) as a person. Line 2 calls nature “her,” which is a type of personification. It treats nature as a woman. But, there’s no personification in line 7. And if an answer is only partially true, then it’s false! So, you can eliminate answer 3.

You might not know what answer 5 means. “Onomatopoeia” is a word that is patterned after a sound. A good example is “woof,” which sounds like the noise a dog makes, or “cock-a-doodle-do,” which is supposed to mimic the sound of a rooster. So, answer 5 is incorrect, but you might not be able to eliminate it.

The correct answer is 2, “alliteration.” Alliteration means having words that start with the same letter. In line 2, the words “hardest,” “hue,” and “hold” all start with the same letter. In line 7, the words “dawn,” “down,” and “day” all start with the same letter. If you didn’t know the term “alliteration,” this might be a really hard one to get right. But if you eliminated any wrong answers, you did a good job!

Writing Question 7**7. When you decide, on a course of action please notify me.**

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of this sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (1).

- 1) you decide, on a course of action
- 2) you decide on a course of action
- 3) you decide, on a course of action,
- 4) you decide on a course of action, ← Correct!
- 5) you decide on, a course of action

The writing questions can sometimes make it hard to eliminate wrong answers. You won't come across many opposites or absolutes to give you clues. This question asks you to decide on the best way to write part of a sentence. All of the choices have to do with commas. So, can you eliminate any wrong answers?

When you're doing a question about commas, try reading through the sentence with a pause where the comma is:

When you decide [pause] on a course of action please notify me.

You might be able to eliminate the original sentence (answer 1) because it sounds wrong.

And if the comma sounds wrong after “decide,” you can eliminate answer 3, too. Adding an extra pause doesn’t make it sound right:

When you decide [pause] on a course of action [pause] please notify me.

Now, you’re down to three choices. Answer 2 doesn’t have a comma at all:

When you decide on a course of action please notify me.

It might be difficult to eliminate that one, so keep it in mind. Answer 4 has one comma after “action”:

When you decide on a course of action [pause] please notify me.

That should sound okay, too. The last answer has a comma after “on.”

When you decide on [pause] a course of action please notify me.

That one probably sounds wrong, and you can eliminate it. That brings you down to a 50/50 chance, which is great odds.

If you know the rule to put a comma after a dependent clause (clauses starting with words like “when,” “since,” or “because”) at the beginning of a sentence, you’ll know that answer 4 is correct. But if not, you’ve done well to eliminate some incorrect answers and improve your chances of getting it right.

Writing Question 8

8. With you’re permission, we will finalize the plans for the library tomorrow.

Which correction should be made to this sentence?

- 1) Remove the comma after permission
- 2) Change you’re to your ← Correct!
- 3) Change library to Library
- 4) Change will finalize to have finalized
- 5) No correction is necessary.

Here’s another writing question. This one isn’t only about commas, though. It has a lot of choices. The problem might be a comma, or the commonly misspelled word “you’re,” or capitalization, or a verb, or no correction at all. All of them are common types of mistakes.

Can you eliminate any incorrect answers? You likely can eliminate one or maybe two of them. It depends on what kind of punctuation, spelling, and grammar knowledge you have. You can try reading the sentence with and without a pause after “permission” to see if you can eliminate answer 1:

With you're permission [pause] we will finalize the plans for the library tomorrow.

With you're permission we will finalize the plans for the library tomorrow.

If both sound okay, leave them in. The pause might sound a little more natural than without the pause, so you may be able to eliminate this answer. Removing the comma is not the best answer.

Answer 2 is the right answer, but you might not know it. “You’re” and “your” are commonly confused. You can tell if “you’re” is right by substituting “you are” into the sentence:

With you are permission, we will finalize the plans for the library tomorrow.

Clearly, “you are” is wrong. That means “you’re” is misspelled, and answer 2 is correct. But, if you don’t know it, you’ll have to move on and check out the other answers.

Answer 3 changes “library” to “Library.” The only way to eliminate this wrong answer is if you know that the word “library” by itself should not be capitalized. It’s only capitalized if it’s part of a name, like the Benjamin Franklin Memorial Library or Library of Congress. If you know the rule, you can eliminate this answer.

Answer 4 changes “will finalize” to “have finalized.” You can probably eliminate this answer by reading aloud to yourself what the change would sound like:

With you're permission, we have finalized the plans for the library tomorrow.

“Have finalized” is in the past, and “tomorrow” is in the future. It sounds wrong because the times are mixed up. So this answer can be eliminated.

The “no corrections are necessary” is a hard answer to eliminate, unless you can spot the right answer. But hopefully, you should be able to narrow down your choices at least by one!

Math Question 9

9. A square patch of lawn has an area of 36 square feet. How much fencing would be required to completely enclose the lawn?

1) 12 feet

2) 24 feet ← Correct!

3) 30 feet

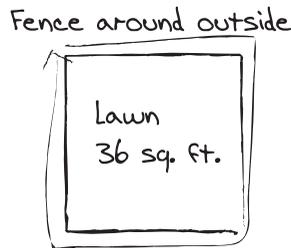
4) 36 feet

5) 72 feet

This question requires you to read it carefully and picture in your mind what it's really asking. It's an easy one to misunderstand! You might have a “hunch” that the answer is 36 feet, since the number 36 is the only one in the question. Or, you

might have a hunch about 72 feet, which is 2 times 36. Well, throw your hunches away on this one!

To think it through, on math problems, drawing a picture on your scrap paper can definitely help.



The **square** is **36 square feet in area** (that means, the inside of the square). And you're looking to **enclose** it with a **fence**. That means the number you *want* is around the outside of the square.

Now, you've gotten this far. Can you eliminate any of the answers? Yes, you can probably eliminate 36, because the perimeter (around the outside) is probably not the same as the area. You can probably eliminate 72, too, because it seems too high. And, you might eliminate 12 as too low, based on the 36 square foot area. That leaves 24 and 30 feet.

The trick to solving this is to find out how long a side of the square should be. So, if the area is 36, how long is a side of the square? Area of a square is one side times another side. Since both sides are the same it's side^2 . So what number, times itself, is 36? In other words, what's the square root of 36? The answer is 6. And the amount of fence would be $6 + 6 + 6 + 6$, or 24.

Here's another way you might think it through. The square has four equal sides. So, whatever the amount of fence is, it has to be evenly divisible by 4. It's got to be in 4 equal pieces. If you've

narrowed the answer down to 24 and 30, you can eliminate 30. Each side would have to be 7.5 feet, and the area would be 7.5×7.5 , which is more than 36. If the answer is 24, then each side is 6 feet, and the area would be 6×6 , or 36, which is correct. Even if you can't eliminate the largest and smallest numbers by estimating, you can eliminate them using this process.

Math Question 10

10. How many possible \$9.99 dinner specials can be ordered off the menu below?

You-Choose-It Dinner Specials, \$9.99

Choose one appetizer, one main course, and one dessert.

Appetizers	Main Courses	Desserts
Buffalo wings	Grilled lemon chicken	Banana split
Quesadillas	Roasted veggie fajitas	Chocolate cake
Nachos	Spicy barbecue ribs	Apple pie
Cheese fingers	Steak and salad	Cherry-cheese pie
<i>Double-up Appetizer for \$1.99 More!</i>	<i>Half-and-Half Main Courses for \$2.49 Extra!</i>	<i>Double-up Dessert for \$1.99 More!</i>

1) 12

2) 16

3) 32

4) 48

5) 64 ← Correct!

This question has some extra information, the prices for extras to the dinner special. If you recognize that you can ignore those extra prices, you're ahead of the game. The question asks, how many \$9.99 (no add-ons!) dinner specials can you order?

It might be tempting to eliminate the highest and lowest number on principle, but unless you have something to estimate from (like the area in the previous question), don't be tempted. That's a "hunch"!

There are three columns to choose from and four choices in each column. A random guess is better than going with a hunch like 4×3 (12). Think it through... are there more than 12 choices? Well, you can make 16 different dinners with just Buffalo wings, without using the other appetizers. If you spend a little time going through counting dinner choices, you'll realize there are a lot more than 12.

You might be able to eliminate 16, too, by counting. But you would spend too much time if you tried to count them all.

If you realize that 64 is $4 \times 4 \times 4$, you might recognize it's the right answer, because it makes sense to multiply all three columns together to get an answer. If not, you'll have to guess! But if you were able to eliminate any of the answers by thinking it through, you're increasing your chance for a high score.

*“A civilized man is one who will give
a serious answer to a serious question.”*

—Ezra Pound
