Strategies for Multiple Choice Tests

- Look for the central, main point of the question.
- Try to decide what the answer to the question is before you read the answers, but don’t write down your answer until you’ve read all the choices.
- Narrow down your choices by eliminating obviously wrong answers.
- Go with your gut, but don’t be afraid to go back and change your answer if you feel really strongly about it.
- Don’t be discouraged if you can’t answer a question easily. Keep moving through the test and you may find that answering another question sparks your memory.
- Beware of “key” words like always, never, none, except, not, most, or least.
- Make an answer for every question – it’s always better than not guessing.
- If you have to guess:
  - The length of choices can be a clue. Consider the longest option.
  - If two choices are very similar, choose neither. The instructor may be trying to trip you up.
  - If two choices are opposites, choose the one that fits the best.
  - Choose the answer that is most like the question (right format, tense, etc).

If you’re not doing well on multiple choice tests, it is very important to find out why. Most people can be successful with multiple choice tests if they know where they have trouble.

Information Gap: You don’t remember seeing this material at all, skimmed over it too quickly, or did not have it in your notes.

Retention Gap: You studied this but couldn’t remember it during the test.

Misinterpretation: You didn’t correctly understand the material when you first learned it.

Synthesis Gap: You didn’t make connections between pieces of information.

Vocabulary Gap: You didn’t know, or assumed incorrectly, the meaning of vocabulary words.

Inability to Decipher: You couldn’t interpret the grammatical structure of the question or response.

Jumped to Conclusions: You didn’t fully consider all the options.

Rushed Response: You did not have/take enough time to carefully read the options.

Over/Under Generalization: You eliminated too many/not enough options.

Misreading: You made decoding errors in reading the question or responses.

Miskeying: You knew the correct answer but marked the wrong response.

Not Using Memory Strategies: You didn’t consciously use memory strategies.

 Didn’t Check Your Answers: You didn’t use any extra time at the end of the test to review your answers.

Reference