

Question Types on the SAT Reading Section

Question Type	Question Stem	Possible Strategies for Answering
<p>Main Idea, Purpose: Identify the main idea and differentiate from supporting details.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main purpose of the passage... • The main purpose of the second paragraph... • Which choice best summarizes... • The references to... in lines 37-40 primarily serve to... • The passage’s discussion of... primarily serves to... • Based on the passage, what is the author’s hypothesis regarding... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main idea is commonly in the first or last sentence of a paragraph or the first paragraph of the passage. The author gives supporting information first and then makes the point in the last sentence. • Write notes in the margin while reading. Look for repeated words, phrases, or similar ideas. • Think of your own answer first, then look at answer choices – know what you want <i>before</i> you start looking.
<p>Inference: Infer meaning not explicitly stated, but implied. Identify evidence that supports the claim. Analyze arguments for content and structure. Could be meaning from one paragraph or the entire passage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which choice provides the best evidence... • Which choice gives an example that most clearly supports the statement... • Which choice most clearly provides information indicating... • The author makes which point about... • The author suggests / indicates that... • The author most strongly implies which of the following about ____ • The central claim in the 4th paragraph is that... • According to the passage.... • The passage most strongly suggests that... • The author uses... as an example of... • It is reasonable to conclude that... • It can most reasonably be inferred... • Which situation is most similar to the one described in lines... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write notes in the margin as you read. • Think of what the passage is hinting at, but not specifically stating. • Think of what the feelings or motivations of the author are. • While reading, write notes in the margin and underline what seems to be points that <i>the author thinks are important</i>. • Re-read surrounding sentences and think of the <i>suggested</i> meaning of a statement or description. • Fill in missing information – ask yourself, "If the author is saying... in the passage, what is the logical conclusion or extension?"
<p>Words in Context: Define vocabulary from context clues in the passage. Words chosen are typically those that are infrequently used or words with more than one meaning (season, novel, draft, cast, custom, sanction).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As used in line 5, this word most nearly means... • As used in line 10, this word is closest in meaning to... • Which choice most closely captures the meaning of the figurative phrase... • Which choice best describes... • In the context of the passage, the author’s use of the phrase ... is primarily meant to convey... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend the word is a <u>blank</u> in the sentence and predict what word <i>could be</i> used. Then look at the answer choices to find one close to the one you thought of. • Look for other words in the sentence to help explain the meaning of the word. • Re-read surrounding sentences and think of the <i>suggested</i> meaning. • Look for examples of what the word is referring to within the same sentence.

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<p>Support with Evidence: Find evidence within one or both passage in a “paired passage” reading. Infer meaning that’s common to both passages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description in the first paragraph indicates... • In the passages, a significant different in how the two authors discuss... indicates that... • Both authors would most likely agree to which statement... • Which of the following is cited in the passage... • Which choice best states the relationship between the two passages? • How would the authors of Passage 2 most likely respond to the... referred to in line 4, Passage 1? • Which choice would best support the claim that the authors of Passage 2 recognize that the... in Passage 1? • How would the authors of Passage 2 most likely respond to ___ referred to in line ___, Passage 1? • Which choice provides the best evidence to the previous question? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write notes in the margin as you read. Label words and ideas that are mentioned in both passages. • Read passage 1 first and answer those questions, then read passage 2 and answer those before answering questions on both. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you try to read the passages back-to-back then answer all the questions, it may be harder to recall information from each. Don’t let them run together. This helps you remember more and not get distracted by answer choices that appeared in the other passage.
<p>Quantitative Data Analysis: Find evidence from a <i>chart, graph, or table</i>. May ask to compare information from two different sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which claim from the passage is most directly supported by the data given... • Which statement about... is best supported by the graph? • Which statement best summarizes the information presented in the graph? • According to the graph, which statement is true about the... • What information discussed in paragraph... is represented by the graph? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the title of the chart right away so you understand the subject. • As you read it, circle parts of the chart that describe important detail. • Look for key words within the graph. • Eliminate answer choices with information not found in the graph. • Identify relationships among parts of the chart.