

10 Steps to Answer Multiple Choice Questions

1. CAREFULLY read the question.

a. Reread the question.

2. Identify and mark the key words in the question.

a. Identify key words such as not, except, cannot, only. Obviously, these words can completely change your choice.

3. Identify and mark the cue words in the question.

a. Cue words help identify the difficulty level of the question.

b. Seventy percent of FCAT questions involve critical thinking.

c. Are you trying to solve, infer, generalize, or rank. Knowing this can help you determine the best answer.

4. Determine if you are looking for the CORRECT answer or the BEST answer.

a. Especially with the FCAT, many answers are plausible and possibly correct, but you are looking for the BEST answer.

5. Try to determine what type of question is being asked.

a. Types:

Words & Phrases in Context

Comparison & Contrast

Main Idea

Method of Development

Author's Purpose

Point of View

Locate, Gather, Analyze, & Evaluate Information

Validity & Reliability of Information

Synthesis & Conclusions from Multiple Sources

Cause & Effect Relationships

Elements of Literature

b. Knowing type of question can help to remember all the strategies you've learned in these areas and subareas.

c. Example: Words and Phrases in Context

- root words, prefixes, suffixes

- denotation and connotation

- context clues

- figurative and idiomatic meanings

6. Attempt to answer the question without looking at the choices.

a. Write the answer in the margin, then examine the choices.

b. Be careful. Even if your original answer is one of the choices, continue through the steps. FCAT questions notoriously contain answers that are very similar and possibly correct.

7. Carefully read all choices.

a. Then, reread the question.

b. Go back to the text if appropriate.

8. Eliminate choices.

a. Attempt to eliminate choices so that only two responses are left.

b. Lightly mark the eliminated choices.

9. Examine the two remaining choices.

a. Go back to the text if appropriate.

b. Mark key elements.

10. Finally, grammar, usage and agreement rules in the question can point to the best choice.