



MCAT Verbal Reasoning Skills

I. Comprehension

- A. Identify the Central concern or thesis of the passage.
- B. Identify the reasons or evidence offered in support of a thesis.
- C. Identify the background knowledge contained in the passage or question that is relevant to a particular interpretation.
- D. Determine, from context, the meaning of significant terminology or vocabulary used in the passage.
- E. Recognize an accurate paraphrase of complex information presented in the passage.
- F. Identify comparative relationships among ideas or pieces of information contained in the passage.
- G. Identify stated or unstated assumptions contained in the passage.
- H. Recognize appropriate questions of clarification.

II. Evaluation

- A. Judge the soundness of an argument or a step of reasoning presented in the passage.
- B. Judge the credibility of a source.
- C. Judge whether a conclusion follows necessarily from the reasons given in the passage.
- D. Appraise the strength of the evidence for a generalization, conclusion, or claim.
- E. Distinguish between supported and unsupported claims
- F. Judge the relevance of information to an argument or claim.

III. Application

- A. Predict a result on the basis of passage content and specific facts about a hypothetical situation.
- B. Use given information to solve a specified problem.



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- C. Identify the probable cause of a particular event or result based on information presented.
- D. Determine the implications of conclusions or results for real-world situations
- E. Recognize the scope of application of hypothesis, explanations, and conclusions.
- F. Identify a general theory or model based on given information.

IV: Incorporation of new information

- A. Judge the bearing of new evidence on conclusions presented in the passage.
- B. Recognize methods or results that would challenge hypotheses, models, or theories given in the passage.
- C. Determine how a conclusion from the passage can be modified to be made consistent with additional information.
- D. Recognize plausible alternative hypotheses or solutions.

Verbal Reasoning Content Categories

Humanities

Passages in the humanities area are drawn from excerpts in architecture, art, literature, music, philosophy, popular culture, religion, and theater. Often focusing on relationships between ideas, humanities passages are more likely to be written in a conversational or opinionated style than the passages in the social sciences and the natural sciences and technology areas. You may therefore be required to glean information from the author's tone and word choice in addition to the passage assertions themselves.

Social Sciences

Passages in the social sciences focus on anthropology, archaeology, economics, education, history, linguistics, political science, psychology, and sociology. These excerpts frequently center on the interpretation, implications, or applications of research in the social sciences, and often are based on studies about people in general or particular social groups. Frequently these passages are structured around a central claim that is either being supported or undermined by the information provided by the author. Sometimes the information in these passages can be very "rough" because the passage deals with complex issues and events in an artificially simplified manner.



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Natural Sciences and Technology

With the focus on astronomy, botany, computer science, ecology, ethology, geology, meteorology, technology, and zoology, passages in the natural sciences and technology area emphasize the significance of scientific and technological issues and advances. Natural sciences passages, which center on factual knowledge and its implications or applications, are often straightforward in their presentation since the claims they support tend to be well defined and clearly circumscribed.