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GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATION

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The material in this book is up-to-date at the time of publication. However, the Educational Testing Service may have instituted changes in the test or test registration process after this book was published. Be sure to read carefully the materials you receive when you register for the test.

If there are any important late-breaking developments—or changes or corrections to the Kaplan test preparation materials in this book—we will post that information online at **kaptest.com/publishing**. Check to see if any information is posted there regarding this book.

# How to Use This Book

## WELCOME TO KAPLAN GRE PREMIER 2016

Congratulations on your decision to pursue a graduate degree, and thank you for choosing Kaplan for your GRE preparation. You've made the right choice in acquiring this book—you're now armed with a comprehensive GRE program that is the result of decades of researching the GRE and teaching many thousands of students the skills they need to succeed. You have everything you need to score higher—let's start by walking through what you need to know to take advantage of this book and the Online Center.

### YOUR BOOK

There are two main components to your *Kaplan GRE Premier* study package: your book and your Online Center. This book contains the following:

- Detailed instruction covering the essential Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Analytical Writing concepts
- Time-tested and effective Kaplan Methods and strategies for every question type
- One full-length practice test and chapter-end practice questions with detailed answer explanations
- A DVD containing instruction and graduate school admission guidance from elite Kaplan faculty

### YOUR ONLINE CENTER

Your Online Center lets you access additional instruction and practice materials to reinforce key concepts and sharpen your GRE skills. Resources include the following:

- Five full-length practice tests
- 500-question Quiz Bank you can use to create customized quizzes
- Ten 20-question Quantitative practice sets

- ten 20-question Verbal practice sets
- five Analytical Writing essay prompts
- detailed answer explanations and sample essay responses
- online answer grid for the practice test found in this book
- academic support from Kaplan faculty via our Facebook page:  
**[www.facebook.com/kaplangradprep](http://www.facebook.com/kaplangradprep)**

## GETTING STARTED

1. Register your Online Center.
2. Take a GRE practice test to identify your strengths and weaknesses.
3. Create a study plan.
4. Learn and practice using this book and your Online Center.

### STEP 1: REGISTER YOUR ONLINE CENTER

Register your Online Center using these simple steps:

1. Go to **[kaptest.com/booksonline](http://kaptest.com/booksonline)**.
2. Follow the onscreen instructions. Please have a copy of your book available.

Access to the Online Center is limited to the original owner of this book and is nontransferable. Kaplan is not responsible for providing access to the Online Center to customers who purchase or borrow used copies of this book. Access to the Online Center expires one year after you register.

### STEP 2: TAKE A GRE PRACTICE TEST

It's essential to take a practice test early on. Doing so will give you the initial feedback and diagnostic information that you need to achieve your maximum score.

Your diagnostic test is Multi-Stage Test (MST) 1, which is found in your Online Center. MST 1, like all of Kaplan's online full-length tests, is a multi-stage test, which is the same format as the actual GRE. The multi-stage test format feels different from a paper-based test and is scored differently, so the more you practice with MSTs, the better off you'll be. However, for your convenience, we've also included a practice test in this book. This practice test, which includes full-length Analytical Writing, Verbal, and Quantitative sections, will give you a chance to familiarize yourself with the various question types. It also allows you to accurately gauge the content you know and identify areas for practice and review. (Use the online answer grid available in your Online Center to enter your answer choices from the practice test in this book to see a detailed breakdown of your performance by question type and topic.)

Review the detailed answer explanations to better understand your performance. Look for patterns in the questions you answered correctly and incorrectly. Were you

stronger in some areas than others? This analysis will help you target your practice time to specific concepts.

### **STEP 3: CREATE A STUDY PLAN**

Use what you've learned from your diagnostic test to identify areas for closer study and practice. Take time to familiarize yourself with the key components of your book and Online Center. Think about how many hours you can consistently devote to GRE study. We have found that most students have success with about three months of committed preparation before Test Day.

Schedule time for study, practice, and review. One of the most frequent mistakes in approaching study is to take practice tests and not review them thoroughly—review time is your best chance to gain points. It works best for many people to block out short, frequent periods of study time throughout the week. Check in with yourself frequently to make sure you're not falling behind your plan or forgetting about any of your resources.

### **STEP 4: LEARN AND PRACTICE**

Your book and Online Center come with many opportunities to develop and practice the skills you'll need on Test Day. Read each chapter of this book and complete the practice questions. Depending on how much time you have to study, you can do this work methodically, covering every chapter, or you can focus your study on those question types and content areas that are most challenging for you. You will inevitably need more work in some areas than in others, but know that the more thoroughly you prepare, the better your score will be.

Remember also to take and review the practice sets in your Online Center. These quizzes give you additional test-like questions so you can put into practice the skills you are learning. As always, review the explanations closely.

Initially, your practice should focus on mastering the needed skills and not on timing. Add timing to your practice as you improve fundamental proficiency. As soon as you are comfortable with the question types and Kaplan Methods, take and review the additional full-length practice tests in your Online Center.

If you find that you would like access to more of Kaplan's practice tests and quizzes, as well as in-depth instruction on the question types and strategies, look into the variety of course options available at [kaptest.com/GRE](http://kaptest.com/GRE).

Thanks for choosing Kaplan. We wish you the best of luck on your journey to graduate school.



**PART ONE**

# **Getting Started**





# Introduction to the GRE

This book will explain more than just a few basic strategies. It will prepare you for practically everything that you are likely to encounter on the GRE. This may sound too good to be true, but we mean it. We are able to do this because we don't explain test questions in isolation or focus on particular test problems. Instead, we explain the underlying principles behind *all* of the questions on the GRE. We give you the big picture.

## UNDERSTANDING THE GRE

Let's take a look at how the GRE is constructed. The GRE, or Graduate Record Examination, is a computer-based exam required by many graduate schools for admission to a wide variety of programs at the graduate level. You need to know firsthand the way this test is put together if you want to take it apart. In this section, you will learn about the purposes of the GRE and ways you can learn to be successful on it. For up-to-the-minute news about the GRE, visit Kaplan's website at [www.kaptest.com/GRE](http://www.kaptest.com/GRE).

## THE PURPOSES OF THE GRE

The GRE is designed to assess readiness for a wide variety of graduate programs. The ways in which graduate schools use GRE scores vary. Scores are often required as part of the application for entrance into a program, but they also can be used to grant fellowships or financial aid. Each section of the GRE is designed to assess general skills necessary for graduate school. Some of these skills include the ability to read complex informational text and understand high-level vocabulary words in the Verbal Reasoning section, respond to an issue in written form in the Analytical Writing section, and apply general mathematical concepts to a variety of problem

types in the Quantitative Reasoning section. Graduate school admissions officers often view the GRE score as an important indicator of readiness for graduate-level studies. In addition, graduate school admissions officers are comparing hundreds or even thousands of applications, and having a quantitative factor, such as a GRE score, makes the job of comparing so many applicants much easier. Just by having this book and making a commitment to yourself to be as well prepared as possible for this exam, you've already taken the crucial first step toward making your graduate school application as competitive as possible.

## THE SECRET CODE

Doing well on the GRE requires breaking down the “secret code” upon which each and every test is constructed. Like all of the tests created by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), the GRE is based on psychometrics, the science of creating “standardized” tests. For a test to be standardized, it must successfully do three things. First, the test must be reliable. In other words, a test taker who takes the GRE should get approximately the same score if she takes a second GRE (assuming, of course, that she doesn't study with Kaplan materials during the intervening period). Second—and this is closely related to our first point—it must test the same concepts on each test. Third, it must create a “bell curve” when a pool of test takers' scores are plotted; in other words, some people will do very well on the test and some will do very poorly, but the great majority will score somewhere in the middle.

What all this boils down to is that to be a standardized test, the GRE has to be predictable. And this is what makes the GRE and other standardized tests coachable. Because ETS has to test the same concepts in each and every test, certain vocabulary words appear over and over again, as do variations of the same exact math questions. Moreover, the GRE has to create some questions that most test takers will get wrong—otherwise, it wouldn't be able to create its bell curve. This means that hard questions will usually contain “traps”—wrong answer choices that will be more appealing than the correct answer to a large percentage of test takers. Fortunately, these traps are predictable (this is what we mean by the “secret code”), and we can teach you how to recognize and avoid them. The goal of this comprehensive program is to help you break the code.

## ACQUIRE THE SKILLS

It has been argued that the GRE isn't a fair or effective predictor of the skills a person needs for graduate-level study. And you may be concerned that your scores on the GRE will not be a fair or accurate representation of the strong work you will do in your advanced degree program. Take heart: None of the GRE experts who work at Kaplan were *born* knowing how to ace the GRE. No one is. That's because these tests do not measure innate skills; they measure *acquired* skills. People who are good at standardized tests are simply people who've already acquired these skills, whether

in math class, or by reading a lot, or by studying logic in college, or—perhaps most efficiently—in one of Kaplan’s GRE courses. But they have, perhaps without realizing it, acquired the skills that spell success on tests like the GRE. And if *you* haven’t, you have nothing whatsoever to feel bad about. It’s time to acquire them now.

### SAME PROBLEMS—BUT DIFFERENT

As we noted, the testmakers use some of the same problems on every GRE. We know it sounds incredible, but it’s true—only the words and numbers change. They test the same principles over and over. Here’s an example.

<u>Quantity A</u>	<u>Quantity B</u>
$x$	4

$$2x^2 = 32$$

This is a type of math problem known as a Quantitative Comparison. (Look familiar? It might, if you’ve taken the SAT. This question type used to appear on the SAT, although this question type was dropped in 2005.) Your job is to examine the relationship and pick **(A)** if Quantity A is bigger, **(B)** if Quantity B is bigger, **(C)** if they’re equal, or **(D)** if not enough information is given to solve the problem.

Most people answer **(C)**, that the quantities are equal. They divide both sides of the centered equation by 2 and then take the square root of both sides to get  $x = 4$ . However, this is incorrect.  $x$  doesn’t have to be 4. It could be 4 *or*  $-4$ ; that is, the quantities could be equal *or* Quantity B could be bigger. Both work, so the answer is **(D)** because the answer cannot be determined from the information given. If you just solve for 4, you’ll get this problem—and every one like it—wrong. ETS figures that if you get burned here, you’ll get burned again next time. Only next time, it won’t be  $2x^2 = 32$ ; it will be  $y^2 = 36$  or  $s^4 = 81$ .

The concepts tested on any particular GRE—right triangles, simple logic, word relationships, and so forth—are the underlying concepts at the heart of *every* GRE. ETS makes changes only after testing them exhaustively. This process is called *norming*, which means taking a normal test and a changed test and administering them to a random group of students. As long as the group is large enough for the purposes of statistical validity and the students get consistent scores from one test to the next, then the revised test is just as valid and consistent as any other GRE.

That may sound technical, but norming is actually a straightforward process. We do it at Kaplan all the time—for the tests that we write for our students. The tests in this book and your Online Center, for instance, are normed exams. While the interactive, computer-based test experience of the GRE is impossible to reproduce on paper, the paper-based test in our book is a normed exam that will produce a roughly equivalent score.

## HOW THE GRE IS ORGANIZED

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is administered on computer and is approximately four hours long, including breaks. The exam consists of six sections, with different amounts of time allotted for you to complete each section.

<b>Basics of the GRE</b>	
Exam Length	4 hours, including breaks
Scoring Scale	130–170 (1-point increments) for Verbal and Quantitative; 0–6 for Analytical Writing
Format	Multi-stage test (MST), a computer-based format that allows students to navigate forward and backward within each section of the test
Number of Test Sections	6 sections, including an experimental or research section
Breaks	One 10-minute break after your third section; 1-minute breaks between all other sections
Analytical Writing	One section with two 30-minute tasks: analyze an issue and analyze an argument
Verbal Reasoning	Two 30-minute sections with approximately 20 questions each
Quantitative Reasoning	Two 35-minute sections with approximately 20 questions each; onscreen calculator available

Your test will also contain an experimental section—an additional Verbal Reasoning or Quantitative Reasoning section that ETS puts on the test so that ETS can norm the new questions it creates for use on future GREs. That means that if you could identify the experimental section, you could doodle for half an hour, guess in a random pattern, or daydream and still get exactly the same score on the GRE. However, the experimental section is disguised to look like a real section—there is no way to identify it. All you will really know on the day of the test is that one of the subject areas will have three sections instead of two. Naturally, many people try to figure out which section is experimental. But because ETS really wants you to try hard on it, it does its best to keep you guessing. If you guess wrong, you could blow the whole test, so we urge you to treat all sections as scored unless you are told otherwise.

Lastly, instead of an experimental section, your test could contain a research section. This section is unscored and will be indicated as such. If you have a research section on the test, it will be the last section. Pay careful attention to the directions at the beginning of the section.

## SCORING

The Analytical Writing section is scored on a scale of 0–6 in half-point increments. (See Chapter 15, “Introduction to Analytical Writing,” for details on this scoring rubric.) The Verbal Reasoning and Quantitative Reasoning sections each yield a scaled score within a range of 130 to 170 in one-point increments. You cannot score higher than 170 for either the Verbal Reasoning or the Quantitative Reasoning sections, no matter how hard you try. Similarly, it’s impossible to score lower than 130 for Verbal Reasoning or Quantitative Reasoning.

But you don’t receive *only* scaled scores; you also receive a percentile rank, which rates your performance relative to that of a large sample population of other GRE takers. Percentile scores tell graduate schools just what your scaled scores are worth. For instance, even if everyone got very high scaled scores, universities would still be able to differentiate candidates by their percentile scores. The following tables give a cross section of the percentile ranks\* that correspond with certain scaled scores on each section of the GRE, based on test takers between August 1, 2011, and April 30, 2014. For the full percentile-to-score conversion tables, see [https://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/gre\\_guide\\_table1a.pdf](https://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/gre_guide_table1a.pdf).

Verbal Reasoning		Quantitative Reasoning		Analytical Writing	
Percentile Ranking	Scaled Score	Percentile Ranking	Scaled Score	Percentile Ranking	Score
99	169–170	98	170	99	6.0
95	165	95	168	98	5.5
87	161	86	163	93	5.0
78	158	78	160	80	4.5
63	154	64	156	56	4.0
50	151	52	153	38	3.5
36	148	37	149	15	3.0
22	144	21	145	7	2.5
10	140	10	141	2	2.0

Universities pay great attention to percentile rank. It’s important that you do some research into the programs you’re thinking about. Admissions officers from many top graduate school programs consider the GRE the most important factor in graduate school admissions. Some schools have cutoff scores below which they don’t even consider applicants. But be careful! If a school tells you it looks for applicants scoring

an average of 150 per section, that doesn't mean those scores are good enough for immediate acceptance. Some students will be accepted with scores below that average, and some students may be denied admission even with scores that are higher. Consider the score of 150 per section as an initial target score, but also be sure the rest of your application is strong. You owe it to yourself to find out what kinds of scores *impress* the schools you're interested in and to work hard until you get those scores. Every day we see students work hard and achieve their target scores. Work hard, and you can be among them.

A final note about percentile rank: The sample population to which you are compared to determine your percentile is not the group of people who take the test on the same day as you do. ETS doesn't want to penalize an unlucky candidate who takes the GRE on a date when everyone else happens to be a rocket scientist. Instead, it compares your performance with that of test takers from the past three years. Don't worry about how other people do—strive for your best score. We often tell our students, “Your only competition in this classroom is yourself.”

## CANCELLATION AND MULTIPLE–SCORES POLICY

Unlike many things in life, the GRE allows you a second chance. If at the end of the test, you feel that you've definitely not done as well as you could have, you have the option to cancel your score. Although score cancellation is available, the option to use *ScoreSelect* means there's rarely a good reason to cancel scores. If you cancel, your scores will be disregarded. (You also won't get to see them.) Canceling a score means that it won't count; however, you will not receive any refund for your test fee.

Two legitimate reasons to cancel your score are illness and personal circumstances that may have caused you to perform unusually poorly on that particular day.

But keep in mind that test takers historically underestimate their performance, especially immediately following the test. They tend to forget about all of the things that went right and focus on everything that went wrong. So unless your performance has been terribly marred by unforeseen circumstances, don't cancel your score. Even if you do cancel your score, it is possible to reinstate it within 60 days for a fee. (See [www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre) for details.)

Also, ETS now offers test takers more choices in determining which scores to report to schools. The relatively new *ScoreSelect* option allows GRE test takers to choose—*after* viewing their scores on Test Day—to report their scores from only the most recent test they took or from all of the GRE tests they have taken in the past five years. Additionally, if a student sends score reports after Test Day, the student can have full freedom to report scores from any testing administration(s), not just the most recent. However, test takers cannot report only Quantitative Reasoning scores or only Verbal Reasoning scores from a given test—results from any testing administration

must be reported in full. For more on the *ScoreSelect* option, go to [www.ets.org/gre/revise\\_general/about/scoreselect](http://www.ets.org/gre/revise_general/about/scoreselect).

Requested score reports are sent to schools 10–15 days after the exam. All GRE testing administrations will remain valid (and usable) in your ETS record for five years. If you choose to report multiple scores, most grad schools will consider the highest score you have for each section, although there are a few exceptions. Check with individual schools for their policies on multiple scores.

Lastly, know that schools receiving your scores will have access to photos taken of you at the test center, plus your Analytical Writing essays from each test administration whose scores you choose to report.

## TEST REGISTRATION

You should obtain a copy of the *GRE Information and Registration Bulletin*. This booklet contains information on scheduling, pricing, repeat testing, cancellation policies, and more. You can receive the booklet by calling the Educational Testing Service at (609) 771-7670 or (866) 473-4373 or by downloading it from [www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre).

The computer-based GRE General Test is offered year-round. To register for and schedule your GRE, use one of the following options. (If you live outside the United States, Canada, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Puerto Rico, visit [www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre) for instructions on how to register.)

Registering earlier is strongly recommended because spaces often fill quickly.

### Register Online

You can register online (if you are paying with a credit or debit card) at [www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre). Once the registration process is complete, you can print out your voucher immediately (and can reprint it if it is lost). If you register online, you can confirm test center availability in real time.

### Register by Phone

Call 1-800-GRE-CALL or 1-800-473-2255. Your confirmation number, reporting time, and test center location will be given to you when you call. Payments can be made with an American Express, Discover, JCB, MasterCard, or Visa credit or debit card.

### Register by Mail

Complete the Authorization Voucher Request Form found in the *GRE Information and Registration Bulletin*. Mail the fee and signed voucher request form in the envelope provided to the address printed on the voucher.

ETS advises that you allow up to three weeks for processing before you receive your voucher in the mail. When you receive your voucher, call to schedule an appointment.



Vouchers are valid for one year from the date of issue. When you register, make sure you list a first- and second-choice test center.

## GRE CHECKLIST

### Before the Test

- Choose a test date.
- Register online at [www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre), by phone at 1-800-GRE-CALL, or by mail.
- Receive your admission voucher in the mail or online.
- Check out your test center.
  - Know the kind of workstation you'll be using and whether the room is likely to be hot or cold.
  - Know the directions to the building and room where you'll be tested.
- Create a test prep calendar to ensure that you're ready by the day of the test.
  - On a calendar, block out the weeks you have to prepare for the test.
  - Based on your strengths and weaknesses, establish a detailed plan of study and select appropriate lessons and practice. (Don't forget to include some days off!)
- Stick to the plan; as with any practice, little is gained if it isn't methodical. Skills can't be "crammed" at the last minute.
- Reevaluate your strengths and weaknesses from time to time and revise your plan accordingly.

### The Day of the Test

- Make sure you have your GRE admission voucher and acceptable ID.
- Leave yourself plenty of time to arrive at the test site stress-free.
- Arrive at the test site at least 30 minutes early for the check-in procedures.
- Don't worry—you're going to do great!

## GRE SUBJECT TESTS

Subject Tests are designed to test the fundamental knowledge that is most important for successful graduate study in a particular subject area. To do well on a GRE Subject Test, you must have an extensive background in the particular subject area—the sort of background you would be expected to have if you had majored in the subject. Subject Tests enable admissions officers to compare students from different colleges with different standards and curricula. Not every graduate school or program requires Subject Tests, so check admissions requirements at those schools in which you're interested.

## **ORGANIZATION, SCORING, AND TEST DATES**

All Subject Tests are administered in paper-based format and consist exclusively of multiple-choice questions that are designed to assess knowledge of the areas of the subject that are included in the typical undergraduate curriculum.

On Subject Tests, you'll earn one point for each multiple-choice question that you answer correctly, but you'll lose one-quarter of a point for each incorrectly answered question. Unanswered questions aren't counted in the scoring. Your raw score is then converted into a scaled score, which can range from 200 to 990. The range varies from test to test.

Some Subject Tests also contain subtests, which provide more specific information about your strengths and weaknesses. The same questions that contribute to your subtest scores also contribute to your overall score. Subtest scores, which range from 20 to 99, are reported along with the overall score. For further information on scoring, you should consult the relevant Subject Test Descriptive Booklet, available from ETS. Subject Tests are offered three times a year: in October, November, and April. Note that not all of the Subject Tests are offered on every test date; consult [www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre) for upcoming test dates and registration deadlines.

## **SUBJECTS**

Currently, seven Subject Tests are offered.

### **Biochemistry, Cell, and Molecular Biology**

This test consists of about 175 questions and is divided among three subscore areas: biochemistry, cell biology, and molecular biology and genetics.

### **Biology**

This test consists of about 200 questions divided among three subscore areas: cellular and molecular biology, organismal biology, and ecology and evolution.

### **Chemistry**

This test consists of about 130 questions. There are no subscores, and the questions cover the following topics: analytical chemistry, inorganic chemistry, organic chemistry, and physical chemistry.

### **Literature in English**

This test consists of about 230 questions on literature in the English language. There are two basic types of questions: factual questions that test your knowledge of writers and literary or critical movements typically covered in the undergraduate curriculum, and interpretive questions that test your ability to read various types of literature critically.

**Mathematics**

This test consists of about 66 questions on the content of various undergraduate courses in mathematics. Most of the test assesses your knowledge of calculus, linear algebra, abstract algebra, and number theory.

**Physics**

This test consists of approximately 100 questions covering mostly material from the first three years of undergraduate physics. Topics include classical mechanics, electromagnetism, atomic physics, optics and wave phenomena, quantum mechanics, thermodynamics and statistical mechanics, special relativity, and laboratory methods. About 9 percent of the test covers advanced topics, such as nuclear and particle physics, condensed matter physics, and astrophysics.

**Psychology**

This test consists of approximately 205 questions drawn from courses most commonly included in the undergraduate curriculum. Questions fall into three categories. The experimental or natural science–oriented category includes questions on learning, language, memory, thinking, sensation and perception, and physiological psychology/behavioral neuroscience. The social or social science–oriented category includes questions on clinical and abnormal psychology, lifetime development, social psychology, and personality. Together, these make up about 83 percent of the test, and each of the two categories provides its own subscore. The other 17 percent or so of the questions fall under the “general” category, which includes the history of psychology, tests and measurements, research design and statistics, and applied psychology.

For more information, consult ETS’s Subject Test section at [www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre).

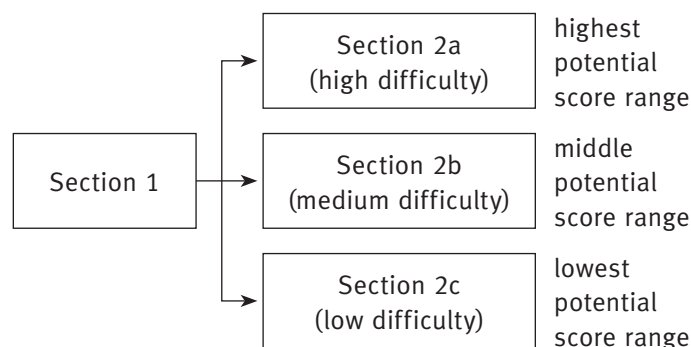
# Multi-Stage Test Mechanics

## HOW THE MST WORKS

The multi-stage test, or MST, differs in some critical ways from the typical standardized test. An MST is a computer-based test that you take at a special test center at a time you schedule. Below is a chart that highlights some of the key features of the GRE MST:

MST Features
The test adapts one section at a time, altering the difficulty level of your second Quantitative and Verbal sections based on your performance on the first of each.
You may answer questions in any order within a section and change your answers to previously answered questions within a section.
An onscreen calculator is provided for the Quantitative Reasoning sections.
Mark & Review buttons are available to help you keep track of questions you want to revisit.
The MST lasts about 4 hours, including breaks.

Now that you have a sense of the overall format and structure of the GRE MST, let's look more closely at what the term *multi-stage test* means, how the MST adapts to your performance, and how these factors determine your score.



The chart above depicts a simplified version of how adaptivity works on the MST. Depending on your performance on the first Quantitative or Verbal section, you may get channeled into a harder or easier second Quantitative or Verbal section. The difficulty of the second section determines your score range—roughly speaking, the “ceiling” and “floor” of your potential Quantitative or Verbal score. Ultimately, your score will be determined by two factors: (1) the difficulty of the questions you receive and (2) the number of questions you answer correctly.

Therefore, it is important to do as well as possible on the first section since that will put you in the best position to achieve a great score. That said, your performance on the second section is still a crucial determinant of your ultimate score. (Note that the test only adapts within a given subject. In other words, your performance on the Verbal section will not affect the difficulty of a subsequent Quantitative section.)

Understanding the adaptive nature of the MST is interesting and somewhat useful in your prep, but it is actually counterproductive to think too much about it on Test Day. Many test takers try to gauge how they are doing on the exam by assessing the difficulty of the second section they receive. Doing this on Test Day is, at best, a waste of brainpower. At worst, it can cause you to become distracted by counterproductive thoughts (“These questions are too easy! What am I doing wrong?”). Just focus on solving the questions in front of you and do your best.

Simply put, the more questions you get right on the first section, the better off you’ll be. The same goes for the second section. Therefore, your goal will be to get as many questions right as possible—not terribly mind-blowing! But how do you do that? Specifically, how can you use the structure of the MST to your advantage as you try to achieve this goal?

Let’s now discuss the best ways to navigate the MST and how you can use these functionalities on Test Day to get as many correct answers as possible.

## **NAVIGATING THE GRE MST INTERFACE**

Let’s preview the primary computer functions that you will use to move around on the MST. ETS calls them “testing tools.” They’re basically tabs that you can click with your mouse to navigate through the section. The following screen is typical for a multi-stage test.

**Directions:** Choose the word or set of words for each blank that best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

**Sample Question**

1. The task was challenging but not \_\_\_\_\_; the instructor was confident her students would rise to the occasion.

impermeable
insuperable
implacable
invulnerable
facile

Click to select your choice

Here's what the various buttons do:

### **The Time Button (not pictured)**

Clicking on this button turns the time display at the top of the screen on or off. When you have five minutes left in a section, the clock will automatically turn on, and the display will change from hours and minutes to hours, minutes, and seconds.

### **The Quit Test Button (not pictured)**

Hitting this button ends the test prematurely. *Do not* use this button unless you want all of your scores canceled and your test invalidated.

### **The Exit Section Button**

This allows you to exit the section before the time is up. Try not to end the section early—use any extra time to review any problems you flagged or felt concerned about.

### **The Review Button**

This button will allow you to view your progress on all the questions you have looked at so far within the section you're working on. The items you have marked for review will have a check mark next to them. The chart on the screen will also have a column indicating whether or not you have answered a question.

### **The Mark Button**

This button allows you to mark a question for review later. The question will have a check mark next to it in the review section.

### **The Help Button**

This button leads to directions and assistance on how to use the test interface. *But beware:* the test clock won't pause just because you click on Help.

### **The Back Button**

This button allows you to return to previous questions within the section. Note that you may only go back to questions in the section you're currently working on.

### **The Next Button**

Hit this when you want to move on to the next question. You cannot proceed until you have hit this button.

### **Calculator (not pictured; Quantitative Reasoning section only)**

This button opens the onscreen calculator on Quantitative Reasoning sections. It's a pretty basic calculator, and the questions tend to be conceptual in nature, but the calculator still can help you to avoid simple computational errors. Note that you can click on the "Transfer Display" button on the calculator to transfer your answer into a numeric entry box.

## **MST SECTION MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES**

Section management is an especially important skill to develop for the GRE. The MST allows you to move around within the section you're working on. This can be a great help if you know how to use this functionality to your advantage, but it can also be a source of uncertainty—with the ability to approach each section in whatever order you wish, where should you start? How can you best use the allotted time to rack up as many points as possible? Here are some principles to follow:

Approach the exam as you would a paper-based one. Since it's impossible (and certainly not a good use of your mental effort) to judge the difficulty level of questions while you're working on them, just focus on doing the best you can on each question—as far as you are concerned, they are all of equal importance to your score. Pace yourself so that you can capitalize on all the questions that you are capable of getting correct.

Don't get bogged down on any one question. If you feel that you are getting stuck, mark the question and go to the next one. Use the Mark and Review buttons to tag questions that you wish to return to later in the section. Sometimes when you take a second look at a question, you'll immediately see how to approach those aspects you previously found challenging.

You can also use the Mark button to indicate that you should come back and review the question if you have time at the end of that section. You can do this whether or

not you've answered the question. This way, you can better organize your time by keeping track of which questions you are done with and which ones need a second look. Even if you are marking a question to come back to later, you may want to enter an answer the first time through. If you run out of time, you'll be glad that you at least put in a guess.

Use extra time at the end of a section to check your work. This is a major advantage of the MST. Always check the review screen before you finish a section to ensure you haven't forgotten to answer a question.

You may find that it is beneficial to start with some of the question types that take less time to answer. For example, you may find that you score highest on the Verbal section when you answer the Sentence Equivalence questions first. Use the practice sets in this book and your online MSTs to find the approach that works best for you.

There is no penalty for guessing on the GRE. As far as the MST is concerned, leaving an answer blank is the same as selecting an incorrect answer. Therefore, you should guess on every question so you at least have a chance of getting it right. But you should always guess strategically. This book will provide many tools, such as elimination strategies and estimation, that will make you an excellent strategic guesser.

Finally, the onscreen timer can work to your advantage, but if you find yourself looking at it so frequently that it becomes a distraction, you should turn it off for 10 or 15 minutes and try to refocus your attention on the test. You may be concerned about your pacing, but being distracted by the timer can be just as damaging to your score as running out of time. As with a traditional paper-and-pencil test, you don't want to get hung up on clock management.

## **MST: THE UPSIDE**

To sum up, there are many good things about the MST, including the following:

- There will be only a few other test takers in the room with you—it won't be like taking a test in one of those massive lecture halls with distractions everywhere.
- You get a 10-minute break after the third section and a 1-minute break between each of the other sections. The breaks are optional, but you should use them to relax, stretch, and clear your head before the next section.
- You can sign up for the GRE just two days before the test (though we recommend signing up much earlier!), and registration is very easy.
- The MST is convenient to schedule. It's offered at more than 175 centers, three to five days a week (depending on the center), all year long.
- Perhaps the MST's best feature is that it gives you your unofficial Verbal Reasoning and Quantitative Reasoning scores immediately.



## MST: THE DOWNSIDE

There are also some less attractive features of the MST:

- The MST is a long test requiring lots of endurance.
- As with any computer-based test, you can't cross off an answer choice to use the process of elimination. Use your scratch paper to avoid reconsidering choices you've already eliminated.
- You have to scroll through Reading Comprehension passages and read them onscreen.
- You'll be given scratch paper to make notes or perform calculations, but if you need more, you'll have to turn in the scratch paper that you've already used before obtaining new paper.
- Many people find that spending considerable time (especially three hours!) in front of a computer screen tires them out and causes eyestrain.
- Having a calculator provided for you on the Quantitative Reasoning sections may seem like a gift, but it comes with a price. The questions on the Quantitative Reasoning section are now more conceptual and less calculation based. Basically, you won't have to worry about doing long division, but the problems will be less straightforward.
- Being able to go back and change your answers may be a plus, but it can lead to pacing issues for some test takers, who will leave questions blank and then either forget to come back to them or run out of time.
- If you wish to take the GRE again, there is a mandatory waiting period: you can only test every 21 calendar days. So if you don't get the scores you need the first time, you need to wait three weeks until you can test again. This can be a problem if you're on a tight deadline.

## PAPER-BASED GRE STRATEGIES

If you are located outside of the United States, Canada, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Puerto Rico, you may take the paper-based version of the GRE (check [www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre) for test dates). It consists of six sections: two Analytical Writing sections, two Verbal Reasoning sections, and two Quantitative Reasoning sections. There is no experimental or research section on the paper-based GRE.

Note that registration for the paper-based test fills up much more quickly than for the MST. You will need to plan ahead to register for the test.

You have approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes to complete the entire test. The test-taking strategies for the paper-based test are different from those for the MST. One strategy we recommend is to keep track of answers you've eliminated by crossing out wrong answer choices in your test booklet. Here are some targeted strategies for each section of the paper-based GRE.

## **ANALYTICAL WRITING**

For the Analytical Writing section, if you are not using a transcriber, you will have to handwrite your essay, so we suggest you write clearly and legibly. For more tips and strategies for conquering the Analytical Writing section, refer to Chapter 15.

## **VERBAL REASONING SECTION**

Before you start a Verbal Reasoning section, glance over it completely but quickly to familiarize yourself with it. With Reading Comprehension, you can preview the question stems to help guide your reading, but don't try to memorize them or answer the questions without reading the passages. We recommend that you answer the questions you're most comfortable with first. Make sure you set aside at least 15 minutes in each Verbal Reasoning section for Reading Comprehension.

Always try to be aware of how long you're spending on each question; this might require more effort than it does on the MST, since you won't have an onscreen timer. If you find yourself getting hung up on a hard question, move on and come back to it later if you have time. You want to give yourself every opportunity to answer as many questions as you are capable of answering correctly.

The Verbal Reasoning sections on the paper-based test have 25 questions—5 more than each section on the MST. The question types and formats on the paper-based Verbal sections are the same as those on the MST, with one exception: the question format that requires you to highlight a sentence, Select-in-Passage, is not available.

## **QUANTITATIVE REASONING SECTION**

As on the Verbal Reasoning sections, it will behoove you to stay aware of your pacing on the Quantitative Reasoning sections. Calculators are now permitted on the GRE and will be provided at the testing center. Still, don't forget to use your scratch paper for any calculations that are more quickly or accurately performed by hand. Feel free to skip around within this section as well and do all the problems you can do; then come back to the harder ones.

The Quantitative Reasoning sections of the paper-based test have 25 questions—5 more than each section on the MST. The question types and formats on the paper-based Quantitative sections are the same as those on the MST. You will also mark all of your answers directly in the test book, which means you don't have to worry about filling in a separate answer grid!

This chapter has given you an understanding of the GRE MST and paper-based test formats. Let's now turn to the test sections and get you ready for each one.



**PART TWO**

# **Verbal Reasoning**



# Introduction to Verbal Reasoning

## OVERVIEW

The Verbal Reasoning section of the GRE tests complex reasoning skills and your ability to analyze the relationships between words and sentences. Vocabulary will be tested contextually, and the reading passages are both dense and written with a sophisticated level of diction. The goal of the test's content, with its emphasis on analytical skills, is to make the test an accurate indicator of your ability to understand what you're reading and apply reasoning skills to the various question types. These skills will translate directly to study at the graduate level.

In this section of the book, we'll take you through all the types of Verbal Reasoning questions you'll see on the GRE and give you the strategies you'll need to answer them quickly and correctly. Also, the vocabulary words you'll most frequently encounter on the test are included in Appendices A–C in the “GRE Resources” section at the back of this book. Think of the glossary and word lists there as building blocks for the questions you will see on the test.

## VERBAL REASONING QUESTION TYPES

The GRE contains two Verbal Reasoning sections with approximately 20 questions each. Each section will last 30 minutes and be composed of a consistent, predictable selection of the following question types:

- Text Completion
- Reading Comprehension
- Sentence Equivalence

The Verbal Reasoning portion of the GRE draws heavily upon your vocabulary and assesses your comprehension of written material. Specifically, it evaluates your ability to do the following:

- Analyze sentences and paragraphs
- Derive a word's meaning based upon its context
- Detect relationships among words
- Understand the logic of sentences and paragraphs
- Draw inferences
- Recognize major, minor, and irrelevant points
- Summarize ideas
- Understand passage structure
- Recognize an author's tone, purpose, and perspective

Within each section of Verbal Reasoning questions on the GRE, you will see an assortment of question types.

## PACING STRATEGY

The GRE allows you to move freely backward and forward within each section, which can be a big advantage on Test Day. If you get stuck on a particular question, you can flag it and come back to it later when you have time. You only score points for correct answers, so you don't want to get bogged down on one problem and lose time you could have used to answer several other questions correctly. You also are not penalized for incorrect answers, so never leave a question blank.

You will have 30 minutes to work on each Verbal Reasoning section. The approximately 20 questions in each section will be an assortment of Text Completion, Sentence Equivalence, and Reading Comprehension items. However, these types of questions are not distributed equally. The chart below shows how many questions you can expect of each type, as well as the average amount of time you should spend per question type.

	<b>Text Completion</b>	<b>Sentence Equivalence</b>	<b>Reading Comprehension</b>
<b>Number of Questions</b>	approx. 6	approx. 4	approx. 10
<b>Time per Question</b>	1–1.5 minutes, depending on the number of blanks	1 minute	1–3 minutes, depending on the length, to read the passage and 1 minute to answer each question

Use these timing estimates as you work on practice questions and exams. With repetition, you will become comfortable keeping to the same amounts of time on Test Day. Additionally, you will be prepared to use the Mark and Review buttons to your advantage while taking the actual test.

## **NAVIGATING THE VERBAL REASONING SECTION OF THIS BOOK**

The next chapter, Verbal Foundations and Content Review, will review the classic verbal concepts and topics that you will encounter on the GRE. This section of the book also includes individual chapters on Text Completion, Sentence Equivalence, and Reading Comprehension questions. Each of those chapters includes an introduction and definition of the relevant question types, followed by a review and examples of the strategies to follow to answer those questions quickly and correctly. In addition, you'll find a practice set with answers and explanations for each of the question types you'll encounter on the GRE.

Finally, at the end of this section, you'll find the Verbal Reasoning Practice Sets, which include not only practice questions but also answers and explanations. Use the Verbal Reasoning Practice Sets to test your skills and pinpoint areas for more focused study. When you are finished with this section of the book, you will have prepared for every question type you might encounter on the Verbal Reasoning section of the GRE.





# Verbal Foundations and Content Review

## INTRODUCTION

The GRE tests your mastery of sophisticated language and a wide range of comprehension skills. These concepts include the following:

- Text Completion and Sentence Correction Concepts
  - Basics of Vocabulary Building
  - Word Groups
  - Greek and Latin Roots
  - Words in Context
  - Parts of Speech
  - The Testmaker's Favorite GRE Words
- Reading Comprehension Strategies
  - Read the First Third of the Passage
  - Determine the Topic, Scope, and Author's Purpose
  - Read Strategically

This chapter will cover all these vocabulary concepts as well as specific Reading Comprehension strategies to conquer any questions you might have pertaining to each concept.

## KAPLAN'S TIPS FOR STUDYING VOCABULARY

While any word can appear on the GRE, some words are more common than others. Many of the words you'll encounter most often during your prep can be found in an appendix of this book. This handy reference tool contains thousands of the words that you're most likely to find on the GRE. Studying these words is a more effective way to build the kind of vocabulary you need than simply reading the dictionary from *aardvark* to *zygote*.

The vocabulary words found on the GRE are usually members of a very particular class of prefixed and suffixed words that typically are derived from Latin or Greek. You probably remember from middle-school English that prefixes and suffixes are attached to the stem of a word to change its meaning. For instance, *contraindicate*, a verb meaning “to give an indication against,” is a great GRE word. So is *contradict*, another verb meaning “to assert the contrary.” Recognizing the prefix *contra-*, meaning “against,” in one of these words can help you to figure out other words with the same prefix (*contravene*, *contraband*, *contraceptive*, etc.). A solid knowledge of prefixes and suffixes will help you derive the meaning of thousands of words you're not familiar with, especially when they're used in context.

One of the major goals of the verbal portion of the GRE is to test your understanding of vocabulary words in context. This means that on any particular question, you'll always be able to deduce correct answers from contextual clues given.

If you see a word in this book—or anywhere in your reading—that's unfamiliar, take a moment to make a note of it. A good practice for acquiring vocabulary is to keep a vocabulary journal of unfamiliar terms and then practice integrating them into your own working vocabulary.

## BASICS OF VOCABULARY BUILDING

Most people build their vocabulary by hearing or reading words in context. Reading is ultimately the best way to increase your vocabulary, but it also takes a great deal of time. There are a couple of techniques you can use to quickly build a more robust vocabulary. In your vocabulary journal, you should be noting words in your reading that aren't familiar to you. As a mental exercise, generate a list of synonyms and antonyms. By compiling such lists, you'll be able to build your vocabulary into an organized structure in your head. It will also be easier to assimilate new words into your active vocabulary if you can easily relate them to other words you already know. For example, if you know what *progressive* means, you'll understand *regressive* immediately if you think of it as the antonym of *progressive*. Making these kinds of cognitive connections will go a long way toward stocking your vocabulary vault.

One final study exercise for vocabulary building is to practice using each unfamiliar word in a sentence. This will help you to internalize the word and its meaning because you'll be using it *in context*.

We'll be going over some of these concepts in more detail later in this chapter, but for now you should be aware of the following tools you can use to build your GRE vocabulary:

- Record and define unfamiliar words.
- Generate synonyms and antonyms.
- Put unfamiliar words in context by using them in sentences.

## WORD GROUPS

While it is helpful to have a broad and diverse (but classically rooted) vocabulary, such as you would be likely to encounter in a graduate-level degree program, the GRE does not test whether you know *exactly* what a particular word means. If you have only an idea of what a word means, you have as good a chance of correctly answering a question as you would if you knew the precise dictionary definition of the word. Learning words in groups based upon similar meanings is an excellent way to expand your useful vocabulary. If you have an idea of what a word means, you can use contextual clues to help nail down the nuances of the correct answer choice.

The words in the list below all mean roughly the same thing. Some of them are different parts of speech, but that's OK. They all have something to do with the concept of criticism, which often appears on the GRE. The goal is to be able to identify words that have similar meanings.

### CRITICIZE/CRITICISM

ASPERSION	BELITTLE	BERATE
CALUMNY	CASTIGATE	DECRY
DEFAMATION	DENOUNCE	DERIDE/DERISIVE
DIATRIBE	DISPARAGE	EXCORIATE
GAINSAY	HARANGUE	IMPUGN
INVEIGH	LAMBASTE	OBJURGATE
OBLOQUY	OPPROBRIUM	PILLORY
REBUKE	REMONSTRATE	REPREHEND
REPROVE	REVILE	TIRADE
VITUPERATE		

On the test, for instance, you might see a Sentence Equivalence question like this one:

Select the **two** answer choices that, when inserted into the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole **and** yield complete sentences that are similar in meaning.

The angry pedestrian \_\_\_\_\_ the careless driver for his recklessness.

- (A) castigated
- (B) reviled
- (C) atoned
- (D) vouchsafed
- (E) lauded
- (F) reproved

The blank in this Sentence Equivalence question describes how an angry pedestrian would behave toward a careless and reckless driver. The correct answers are *castigated* (A) and *reviled* (B). If you know that *castigate* means something like “criticize harshly,” that should be enough to know that *reviled* (which means to assail with harsh language) will yield a sentence that means nearly the same thing. *Reproved* is a tempting but deceptive choice. *Reproved* also has a connotation suggestive of criticism. However, the charge of the word *reproved* is far milder than that of the other two words. Therefore, it would produce a sentence that is much less strident in tone. Only *castigated* and *reviled* produce equivalent sentences.

The *criticize* group is not the only group of synonyms whose members appear frequently on the GRE. There are plenty of others. And lists of synonyms are much easier to learn than many words in isolation. Learn them with a thesaurus. Make synonym index cards based on the common groups of GRE words and peruse those lists periodically.

You can certainly add to the word group lists provided in the appendices to this edition, or you can start to generate your own. In addition to synonyms and antonyms, you can put together lists grouped by etymology, similar meaning, and positive and negative connotations.

If you think this suggestion might be fallacious, consider the following: the words in the following list all have something to do with the concept of falsehood. Their precise meanings vary: *erroneous* means “incorrect,” whereas *mendacious* means “lying.” But the majority of test questions won’t require you to know the exact meanings of these words. You will most likely get the question right if you simply know that these words have something to do with the concept of falsehood. If you do have to differentiate between different shades of meaning, that’s where contextual clues will help you out.

**FALSEHOOD**

APOCRYPHAL	CANARD	CHICANERY
DISSEMBLE	DUPLICITY	EQUIVOCATE
ERRONEOUS	ERSATZ	FALLACIOUS
FEIGNED	GUILE	MENDACITY
PERFIDY	PREVARICATE	SPECIOUS
SPURIOUS		

Consider this Text Completion question:

Though he was prone to \_\_\_\_\_, the corrupt executive was still capable of moments of honesty.

- (A) displeasure
- (B) mendacity
- (C) failure
- (D) levity
- (E) histrionics

The contrast key word "though" indicates that the blank should mean the opposite of "honesty." You might not know the exact denotation of *mendacity*, but because you studied word groups, you'll know that it has the connotation of "false," which will be enough to get the question right.

**GREEK AND LATIN ROOTS**

Because GRE words are so heavily drawn from Latin and Greek origins, learning word roots can be extremely useful, both in deciphering words with obscure meanings and in guessing intelligently. Studying Latin and Greek roots can allow you to figure out the definitions of words you've never even seen before!

Any individual word root will apply to numerous words, and you'll learn more words in less time if you learn them in groups. For example, once you know that the root PLAC means "to please," you have a hook for remembering the meanings of several words: *placate*, *implacable*, *placid*, *placebo*, and *complacent*.

Sometimes you can use roots to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Suppose, for example, you come across the word *circumnavigate* and don't know what it means. If you know that the root CIRCUM means "around" and that the root NAV means "ship, sail," then you can guess that *circumnavigate* means "to sail around," as in "*circumnavigate* the globe." Once you've learned the root, you will be able to recognize the meanings of other words with that root, such as *circumvent* or *circuitous*.

Consider the word *panoptic*. It comes from the Greek PAN, meaning “all,” and OPTIC, meaning “to see/observe.” If you put it all together, you’ll arrive at a definition like “everything visible in one view.” If you know that, you’ll have an advantage in deconstructing other words that incorporate similar constituent parts. You’ll have an easier time parsing language with words like *panacea*, *optician*, and *pandemonium*.

Roots offer a common denominator for words thousands of years old—but language changes a lot over time, and words take on new meanings or lose old meanings. Roots don’t always give accurate clues about meaning. For example, the word *pediatrician* has PED for a root, and PED has to do with the foot. But a *pediatrician* is a children’s doctor. A *podiatrist* is a foot doctor. The reason for this is that PED in regard to feet is a Latin root but PED in regard to children is a Greek root.

The good news is that these aberrations are precisely that: exceptions that prove the rule. More often than not, you should be able to use etymology to your advantage.

## WORDS IN CONTEXT

Learning words in context is one of the best ways for the brain to retain word meanings. In GRE Resources at the back of this book, we’ve not only listed the top 200 GRE words with their definitions, but we’ve also used all of these words *in context* to help you to remember them. After all, the test is trying to measure how well prepared applicants are for graduate-level academic study. Most graduate students spend much of their time deciphering dense, high-level writing. Given that, your best bet is to read material written for an educated audience, at the graduate level.

As mentioned above, reading is ultimately the best way to increase your vocabulary, although it also takes the most time. Of course, some types of reading material contain more GRE vocabulary words than others. You should get into the habit of reading publications written in a sophisticated register with dense prose, such as the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. And because you’ll have to read from the computer screen on Test Day, Kaplan recommends that you start reading these publications online, if possible. You might as well start getting accustomed to reading in the testing mode.

This is also a good place to incorporate a technique mentioned earlier: composing practice sentences using the words you’re studying. This will ingrain the words in your mind by situating them within a meaningful context.

## PARTS OF SPEECH

The GRE never directly tests your ability to classify words by part of speech, but you will get a higher score on Test Day if you can distinguish nouns, adverbs, adjectives, and verbs. If you know how an answer choice must fit into a sentence, you’ll be better equipped to narrow down the possible answer choices. Use your understanding of grammar and syntax to help you arrive at the correct answer.

## Words with Multiple Meanings

Remember that words can have more than one meaning. They can also function as more than one part of speech. Here's a single word used as a noun, adjective, and verb:

As the test tube rested overnight, some *precipitate* formed. (noun)

It would be better to proceed with caution than to take *precipitate* action. (adjective)

Passage of the resolution could well *precipitate* rebellion. (verb)

The same word, *precipitate*, has vastly different meanings when used in these various forms. As a noun, it means solid matter forming in a solution; as an adjective, it denotes a hasty or rushed action; and, as a verb, it means to force suddenly, often into violence. If you're able to identify the different meanings some words have when they function as different parts of speech, you'll have one more weapon in your arsenal for attacking Sentence Equivalence and Text Completion questions.

## Nouns

A noun names a person, place, or thing and answers the questions "Who?" "Where?" or "What?" A noun can function as the subject ("The *eulogy* was eloquent.") or as the object of a verb ("He wrote an eloquent *eulogy*.").

If you know the meaning of a word, you can tell if it's a noun by thinking about the way it would be used in a sentence.

- If the word can function as the subject of a sentence, it's a noun.
- If it can be replaced by a nominative pronoun (*he, she, it, or they*), it's a noun.
- If you can put the word *a, an, or the* in front of it, it's a noun.
- If you don't know the meaning of a word but it has one of the following suffixes, then it's probably a noun.

–ACY

–ANCY

–ENCY

–ICE

–IST

–NESS

–RY

–TION

–AGE

–DOM

–ERY

–ICS

–ITY

–OGY

–SHIP

–TUDE

–ANCE

–ENCE

–HOOD

–ISM

–MENT

–OR

–SION

–URE