

GMAT Prep

Reading Comprehension 1



Reading Comprehension 1

Introduction

- **Number of Passages:** About four reading comprehension passages with a total of 12-14 questions.
- **Length:** A short passage - about 200-250 words (2-3 paragraphs), a long passage - over 300 words (3-5 paragraphs).
- **Number of Questions:** A short passage - 3 questions and a long passage - 4-5 questions. The number of questions associated with a passage is not stated.
- **Areas:** The social sciences, humanities, the physical or biological sciences and business related fields.
- **Type of Content:** The passages are usually scholarly articles that feature in journals related to the subject they discuss.
- **Complexity of Ideas:** The logic is also very objective in nature and does not require subjective understanding.



Reading Comprehension 1

Strategy for Reading Comprehension

- Read and comprehend the passage
- Identify the question type and apply the question specific strategy
- Eliminate the incorrect answer choices



Reading Comprehension 1

Tips to read and comprehend a passage

1. Engage with the passage

- Do not get distracted.
- Pretend to like the passage even if you don't.
- Develop your working memory.

2. Identify the simple story

- Make a table of contents – a brief headline for every paragraph
- Segregate the content (subject matter) and the judgement (what the author or others believe)
- Check if there are major twists in the discussion.

3. Link every new idea to what you have already read

- Is the new sentence expected or surprising?
- Does it support or oppose earlier material?
- Does it answer or ask a question?



Reading Comprehension 1

4. Pay Attention to Signals

- Shift of ideas within and between paragraphs
- Identify the signal words (Ex: furthermore, additionally, consequently, nevertheless, apparently etc.)

5. Pick up the Pace

- Be quicker after the first paragraph. You must read the whole passage but Do NOT get lost in details later on in the passage. Do NOT try to master every bit of content.

Pay close attention to the following elements

- Beginnings & endings of paragraphs.
- Big surprises or changes in direction.
- Big results, answers, or payoffs.



Reading Comprehension 1

Reading Comprehension Question Types

1. Primary Purpose/Main Idea Questions
2. Factual Questions
3. Inference Questions
4. Logical Structure Questions
5. Application Questions
6. Style and Tone Questions



Reading Comprehension 1

Primary Purpose/Main Idea Questions: You can determine the Primary Purpose /Main Idea from the overall organization or development of the passage.

Common Question Stems

- The *primary purpose* of the passage is to
- The *passage as a whole* can best be described as doing which of the following?
- The passage is *primarily/chiefly/mainly concerned with/focuses on*
- Which of the following most accurately states the *main idea* of the passage?
- Which of the following *titles* best describes the passage as a whole?

Strategy for Primary Purpose/Main Idea Questions

1. Evaluate

Evaluate the thought flow chart, especially the main idea.

2. Eliminate

Eliminate options that focus on the idea and purpose of particular parts of the passage instead of taking the passage as a whole into account.



Reading Comprehension 1

Factual Questions: They are explicitly stated in the passage.

Common Question Stems

- *According to the passage/author*, which of the following is true?
- The passage *provides information* for answering which of the following questions?
- *Based on the information* in the passage what is accurate?
- The author *asserts/states/mentions* which of the following?
- *According to the passage*, all are mentioned EXCEPT:

Strategy for Factual Questions

1. Try to predict an answer.
2. Locate the relevant text in the passage.
3. Read that portion of the passage again.
4. Paraphrase the information.



Reading Comprehension 1

Inference Questions: They are not explicitly stated in the passage.

Common Question Stems

- The author *suggests*
- It can be *inferred/implied*
- Which of the following statements finds *support in the passage?*
- Which of the following statements about ... *are supported by the passage?*
- It can be *inferred* EXCEPT:

Strategy for Inference Questions

1. The inferences have to logically follow from the information given in the passage.
2. Do not go out of the scope of the passage. The questions do not require you to read the author's mind.
3. Eliminate answer choices that make arguments that are extreme in their ideas or use of language.



Reading Comprehension 1

Logical Structure Questions: These questions require you to analyze and evaluate the organization and logic of the passage.

Common Question Stems

- Which of the following *describes the function* of the concluding sentence/paragraph of the passage?
- Which of the following best *describes the relation* of the first paragraph to the passage as a whole?
- The author *mentions/uses/refers 'x' in order to*
- The *last sentence serves primarily to*
- Which of the following *techniques* are used by the author to convey his message?
- Which of the following *best describes the organization of the passage?*

Strategy for Logical Structure Questions

Use the thought flow chart to identify how the author has constructed the passage and conveyed his ideas.



Reading Comprehension 1

Application Questions: These questions measure your ability to discern the relationships between situations or ideas presented by the author and other situations or ideas that might parallel those in the passage.

Common Question Stems

- Which of the following *best describes* '.....' *as defined* in the passage?
- Which of the following would serve as *an example of*?
- Which of the following is *most consistent with the principle* described in lines 22-23?
-described in the passage is *most similar* to which of the following?
- The author of the passage would most likely *agree/disagree*

Strategy for Application Questions

1. Simplify the situation/principle/idea, for which you have to find an example in the answer choices, into your own words focusing on the underlying logic.
2. Eliminate answer choices that deviate from the logic.



Reading Comprehension 1

Tone Questions: These questions ask you to identify the author's attitude or perspective.

Common Question Stems

- Which of the following best describes the author's *attitude* towards...
- The *tone* of the author is best *described as*
- The *attitude* of the author of the passage toward x is best described as one of
- The author *regards the idea that**is incomplete with?*
- To an assertion that the author would most probably *respond with which of the following?*

Strategy for Tone Questions

1. Pay attention to "how" the author expresses his opinion. The author's tone is most evident when he is presenting his view or opinion.
2. What are the words he uses to do so? These words reveal the author's tone.



Reading Comprehension 1

Passage 1

Seeking a competitive advantage, some professional service firms (for example, firms providing advertising, accounting, or healthcare services) have considered offering unconditional guarantees of satisfaction. Such guarantees specify what clients can expect and what the firm will do if it fails to fulfill these expectations. Particularly with first-time clients, an unconditional guarantee can be an effective marketing tool if the client is very cautious, the firm's fees are high, the negative consequences of bad service are grave, or business is difficult to obtain through referrals and word-of-mouth.

However, an unconditional guarantee can sometimes hinder marketing efforts. With its implication that failure is possible, the guarantee may, paradoxically, cause clients to doubt the service firm's ability to deliver the promised level of service. It may conflict with a firm's desire to appear sophisticated or may even suggest that a firm is begging for business. In legal and health care services, it may mislead clients by suggesting that lawsuits or medical procedures will have guaranteed outcomes. Indeed, *professional service firms* with outstanding reputations and performance to match have little to gain from offering unconditional guarantees. And any firm that implements an unconditional guarantee without undertaking a commensurate commitment to quality of service is merely employing a potentially costly marketing gimmick.



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1. The primary function of the passage as a whole is to

- A. account for the popularity of a practice
- B. evaluate the utility of a practice
- C. demonstrate how to institute a practice
- D. weigh the ethics of using a strategy
- E. explain the reasons for pursuing a strategy



Reading Comprehension 1

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2. All of the following are mentioned in the passage as circumstances in which professional service firms can benefit from offering an unconditional guarantee EXCEPT:

- A. The firm is having difficulty retaining its clients of long standing.
- B. The firm is having difficulty getting business through client recommendations.
- C. The firm charges substantial fees for its services.
- D. The adverse effects of poor performance by the firm are significant for the client.
- E. The client is reluctant to incur risk.



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3. Which of the following is cited in the passage as a goal of some professional service firms in offering unconditional guarantees of satisfaction?

- A. A limit on the firm's liability
- B. Successful competition against other firms
- C. Ability to justify fee increases
- D. Attainment of an outstanding reputation in a field
- E. Improvement in the quality of the firm's service



Reading Comprehension 1

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4. The passage's description of the issue raised by unconditional guarantees for health care or legal services most clearly implies that which of the following is true?
- A. The legal and medical professionals have standards of practice that would be violated by attempts to fulfill such unconditional guarantees.
 - B. The result of a lawsuit of medical procedure cannot necessarily be determined in advance by the professionals handling a client's case.
 - C. The dignity of the legal and medical professions is undermined by any attempts at marketing of professional services, including unconditional guarantees.
 - D. Clients whose lawsuits or medical procedures have unsatisfactory outcomes cannot be adequately compensated by financial settlements alone.
 - E. Predicting the monetary cost of legal or health care services is more difficult than predicting the monetary cost of other types of professional services.



Reading Comprehension 1

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5. Which of the following hypothetical situations best exemplifies the potential problem noted in the second sentence of the second paragraph?
- A. A physician's unconditional guarantee of satisfaction encourages patients to sue for malpractice if they are unhappy with the treatment they receive.
 - B. A lawyer's unconditional guarantee of satisfaction makes clients suspect that the lawyer needs to find new clients quickly to increase the firm's income.
 - C. A business consultant's unconditional guarantee of satisfaction is undermined when the consultant fails to provide all of the services that are promised.
 - D. An architect's unconditional guarantee of satisfaction makes clients wonder how often the architect's buildings fail to please clients.
 - E. An accountant's unconditional guarantee of satisfaction leads clients to believe that tax returns prepared by the accountant are certain to be accurate.



Reading Comprehension 1

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6. The passage most clearly implies which of the following about the professional service firms mentioned in italics?
- A. They are unlikely to have offered unconditional guarantees of satisfaction in the past.
 - B. They are usually profitable enough to be able to compensate clients according to the terms of an unconditional guarantee.
 - C. They usually practice in fields in which the outcomes are predictable.
 - D. Their fees are usually more affordable than those charged by other professional service firms.
 - E. Their clients are usually already satisfied with the quality of service that is delivered



Reading Comprehension 1

Passage 2

In his 1976 study of slavery in the United States, Herbert Gutman, like Fogel, Engerman, and Genovese, has rightly stressed the slaves' achievements. But unlike these historians, Gutman gives plantation owners little credit for these achievements. Rather, Gutman argues that one must look to the Black family and the slaves' extended kinship system to understand how crucial achievements, such as the maintenance of a cultural heritage and the development of a communal consciousness, were possible. His findings compel attention.

Gutman recreates the family and extended kinship structure mainly through an ingenious use of what any historian should draw upon, quantifiable data, derived in this case mostly from plantation birth registers. He also uses accounts of ex-slaves to probe the human reality behind his statistics. These sources indicate that the two-parent household predominated in slave quarters just as it did among freed slaves after emancipation. Although Gutman admits that forced separation by sale was frequent, he shows that the slaves' preference, revealed most clearly on plantations where sale was infrequent, was very much for stable monogamy.



Reading Comprehension 1

In less conclusive fashion Fogel, Engerman, and Genovese had already indicated the predominance of two-parent households; however, only Gutman emphasizes the preference for stable monogamy and points out what stable monogamy meant for the slaves' cultural heritage. Gutman argues convincingly that the stability of the Black family encouraged the transmission of – and so was crucial in sustaining – the Black heritage of folklore, music, and religious expression from one generation to another, a heritage that slaves were continually fashioning out of their African and American experiences.

Gutman's examination of other facets of kinship also produces important findings. Gutman discovers that cousins rarely married, an exogamous tendency that contrasted sharply with the endogamy practiced by the plantation owners. This preference for exogamy, Gutman suggests, may have derived from West African rules governing marriage, which, though they differed from one tribal group to another, all involved some kind of prohibition against unions with close kin. This taboo against cousins' marrying is important, argues Gutman, because it is one of many indications of a strong awareness among slaves of an extended kinship network.



Reading Comprehension 1

The fact that distantly related kin would care for children separated from their families also suggests this awareness. When blood relationships were few, as in newly created plantations in the Southwest, "fictive" kinship arrangements took their place until a new pattern of consanguinity developed. Gutman presents convincing evidence that this extended kinship structure – which he believes developed by the mid-to-late eighteenth century - provided the foundations for the strong communal consciousness that existed among slaves

In sum, Gutman's study is significant because it offers a closely reasoned and original explanation of some of the slaves' achievements, one that correctly emphasizes the resources that slaves themselves possessed.



Reading Comprehension 1

7. Which of the following best describes the organization of the passage?

- A. The author compares and contrasts the work of several historians and then discusses areas for possible new research.
- B. The author presents his thesis, draws on the work of several historians for evidence to support his thesis, and concludes by reiterating his thesis.
- C. The author describes some features of a historical study and then uses those features to put forth his own argument.
- D. The author summarizes a historical study, examines two main arguments from the study, and then shows how the arguments are potentially in conflict with one another.
- E. The author presents the general argument of a historical study, describes the study in more detail, and concludes with a brief judgment of the study's value.



Reading Comprehension 1

8. Which of the following is the most appropriate title for the passage, based on its content?

- A. The Influence of Herbert Gutman on Historians of Slavery in the United States
- B. Gutman's Explanation of How Slaves Could Maintain a Cultural Heritage and Develop a Communal Consciousness
- C. Slavery in the United States: New Controversy About an Old Subject
- D. The Black Heritage of Folklore, Music, and Religious Expression: Its Growing Influence
- E. The Black Family & Extended Kinship Structure: How They Were Important for Freed Slaves



Reading Comprehension 1

9. According to the passage, Fogel, Engerman, Genovese, and Gutman have all done which of the following?

- I. Discounted the influence of plantation owners on slaves' achievements.
 - II. Emphasized the achievements of slaves.
 - III. Pointed out the prevalence of the two-parent household among slaves.
- A. Both I and II
 - B. Both II and III
 - C. Both I and III
 - D. Only II
 - E. All I, II, III



Reading Comprehension 1

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- 10. Which of the following statements about the formation of the Black heritage of folklore, music, and religious expression is best supported by the information presented in the passage?**
- A. The heritage was formed primarily out of the experiences of those slaves who attempted to preserve the stability of their families.
 - B. The heritage was not formed out of the experiences of those slaves who married their cousins.
 - C. The heritage was formed more out of the African than the American experiences of slaves.
 - D. The heritage was not formed out of the experiences of only a single generation of slaves.
 - E. The heritage was formed primarily out of slaves' experiences of interdependence on newly created plantations in the Southwest.



Reading Comprehension 1

Gutman's examination of other facets of kinship also produces important findings. Gutman discovers that cousins rarely married, an exogamous tendency that contrasted sharply with the endogamy practiced by the plantation owners. This preference for exogamy, Gutman suggests, may have derived from West African rules governing marriage, which, though they differed from one tribal group to another, all involved some kind of prohibition against unions with close kin. This taboo against cousins' marrying is important, argues Gutman, because it is one of many indications of a strong awareness among slaves of an extended kinship network.

11. According to the passage, all of the following are true of the West African rules governing marriage mentioned in the italicized sentence “This preference for exogamy... unions with close kin” EXCEPT:

- A. The rules were derived from rules governing fictive kinship arrangements.
- B. The rules forbade marriages between close kin.
- C. The rules are mentioned in Herbert Gutman's study.
- D. The rules were not uniform in all respects from one West African tribe to another.
- E. The rules have been considered to be a possible source of slaves' marriage preferences.



Reading Comprehension 1

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12. In the context in which it appears, “consanguinity” most nearly means –

- A. empathy for similar tribes
- B. marriage with close kin
- C. marriage outside bloodline
- D. being related by blood
- E. emancipation from slavery



Reading Comprehension 1

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- 13. With which of the following statements regarding the resources that historians ought to use would the author of the passage be most likely to agree?**
- A. Historians ought to make use of written rather than oral accounts.
 - B. Historians should rely primarily on birth registers.
 - C. Historians should rely exclusively on data that can be quantified.
 - D. Historians ought to make use of data that can be quantified.
 - E. Historians ought to draw on earlier historical research but in order to refute it.



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- 14. Which of the following statements concerning the marriage practices of plantation owners during the period of Black slavery in the United States can most logically be inferred from the information in the passage?**
- A. These practices began to alter sometime around the mid-eighteenth century.
 - B. These practices varied markedly from one region of the country to another.
 - C. Plantation owners usually based their choice of marriage partners on economic considerations.
 - D. Plantation owners often married earlier than slaves.
 - E. Plantation owners often married their cousins.



Reading Comprehension 1

Passage 3

Prior to 1975, union efforts to organize public-sector clerical workers, most of whom are women, were somewhat limited. The factors favoring unionization drives seem to have been either the presence of large numbers of workers, as in New York City, to make it worth the effort, or the concentration of small numbers in one or two locations, such as a hospital, to make it relatively easy. Receptivity to unionization on the workers' part was also a consideration, but when there were large numbers involved or the clerical workers were the only unorganized group in a jurisdiction, the multi-occupational unions would often try to organize them regardless of the workers' initial receptivity. *The strategic reasoning was based, first, on the concern that politicians and administrators might play off unionized against non-unionized workers, and second, on the conviction that a fully unionized public work force meant power, both at the bargaining table and in the legislature.* In localities where clerical workers were few in number, were scattered in several workplaces, and expressed no interest in being organized, unions more often than not ignored them in the pre-1975 period.



Reading Comprehension 1

But since the mid-1970s, a different strategy has emerged. In 1977, 34 percent of government clerical workers were represented by a labor organization, compared with 46 percent of government professionals, 44 percent of government blue-collar workers, and 41 percent of government service workers. Since then, however, the biggest increases in public-sector unionization have been among clerical workers. Between 1977 and 1980, the number of unionized government workers in blue-collar and service occupations increased by only about 1.5 percent, while in the white-collar occupations, the increase was 20 percent and among clerical workers in particular, the increase was 22 percent.



Reading Comprehension 1

What accounts for this upsurge in unionization among clerical workers? First, more women have entered the workforce in the past few years, and more of them plan to remain working until retirement age. Consequently, they are probably more concerned than their predecessors were about job security and economic benefits. Also, the women's movement has succeeded in legitimizing the economic and political activism of women on their own behalf, thereby producing a more positive attitude toward unions. The absence of any comparable increase in unionization among private-sector clerical workers, however, identifies the primary catalyst—the structural change in the multi-occupational public-sector unions themselves. Over the past twenty years, the occupational distribution in these unions has been steadily shifting from predominantly blue-collar to predominantly white-collar. Because there are far more women in white-collar jobs, an increase in the proportion of female members has accompanied the occupational shift and has altered union policy-making in favor of organizing women and addressing women's issues.



Reading Comprehension 1

15. According to the passage, the public-sector workers who were most likely to belong to unions in 1977 were

- A. professionals
- B. managers
- C. clerical workers
- D. service workers
- E. blue-collar workers



Reading Comprehension 1

16. The author cites union efforts to achieve a fully unionized workforce in italics [*The strategic reasoning... legislature.*] in order to account for why
- A. politicians might try to oppose public-sector union organizing
 - B. public-sector unions have recently focused on organizing women
 - C. early organizing efforts often focused on areas where there were large numbers of workers
 - D. union efforts with regard to public-sector clerical workers increased dramatically after 1975
 - E. unions sometimes tried to organize workers regardless of the workers' initial interest in unionization



Reading Comprehension 1

17. The author's claim that, since the mid-1970's, a new strategy has emerged in the unionization of public-sector clerical workers in italics [*But since the mid-1970's, a different strategy has emerged.*] would be strengthened if the author
- A. described more fully the attitudes of clerical workers toward labor unions
 - B. compared the organizing strategies employed by private-sector unions with those of public-sector unions
 - C. explained why politicians and administrators sometimes oppose unionization of clerical workers
 - D. indicated that the number of unionized public-sector clerical workers was increasing even before the mid-1970's
 - E. showed that the factors that favored unionization drives among these workers prior to 1975 have decreased in importance



Reading Comprehension 1

18. According to the passage, in the period prior to 1975, each of the following considerations helped determine whether a union would attempt to organize a certain group of clerical workers EXCEPT

- A. the number of clerical workers in that group
- B. the number of women among the clerical workers in that group
- C. whether the clerical workers in that area were concentrated in one workplace or scattered over several workplaces
- D. the degree to which the clerical workers in that group were interested in unionization
- E. whether all the other workers in the same jurisdiction as that group of clerical workers were unionized



Reading Comprehension 1

19. The author states that which of the following is a consequence of the women's movement of recent years?

- A. An increase in the number of women entering the workforce
- B. A structural change in multi-occupational public-sector unions
- C. A more positive attitude on the part of women toward unions
- D. An increase in the proportion of clerical workers that are women
- E. An increase in the number of women in administrative positions



Reading Comprehension 1

20. The main concern of the passage is to

- A. advocate particular strategies for future efforts to organize certain workers into labor unions
- B. explain differences in the unionized proportions of various groups of public-sector workers
- C. evaluate the effectiveness of certain kinds of labor unions that represent public-sector workers
- D. analyze and explain an increase in unionization among a certain category of workers
- E. describe and distinguish strategies appropriate to organizing different categories of workers



Reading Comprehension 1

Home Assignment

Reading Comprehension 1	Book 1	Class Questions Home assignment	Revise Class Questions Solve & Review 3 passages	~ 60 minutes	20 23
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Thank you