

# Multiple-Choice Tests

Many of the tests you take in school will be multiple-choice tests. Here are two types of items you will often find on multiple-choice tests.

## **1. *An incomplete statement followed by several answer choices.***

In this type of item, the missing part of the statement can be anywhere in the statement. You must circle the letter that represents the answer choice that correctly completes the statement. Usually there are four answer choices represented by the letters a, b, c, and d. Sometimes there are more than four answer choices.

Here is an example of this type of item:

The first president of the United States, \_\_\_\_\_, was known as the "Father of his country."

- a. Thomas Jefferson
- b. Abraham Lincoln
- c. George Washington
- d. Theodore Roosevelt

You should circle "c" to show that George Washington was the first president of the United States.

## **2. *A question followed by several answer choices.***

In this type of item, you must circle the letter that represents the answer choice that correctly answers the question.

Here is an example of this type of item:

How many states make up the United States of America?

- a. 48
- b. 52
- c. 46
- d. 50

You should circle "d" to show that 50 is the correct answer choice for this question.

Sometimes, one of the answer choices is "all of the above." In the following example, "e" is the correct answer choice because all of the foods shown are dairy products.

Which of the following foods are dairy products?

- a. milk
- b. ice cream
- c. yogurt
- d. cream cheese
- e. all of the above

Other times, one of the answer choices is "none of the above." In the following example, "b" is the correct answer choice because Argentina is the only country listed that is in South America. For "e" to be correct, none of the countries listed could be in South America.

\_\_\_\_\_ is a country in South America.

- a. Russia
- b. Argentina
- c. Mexico
- d. Japan
- e. none of the above

## Guidelines When Taking Multiple-Choice Tests

Here are some guidelines that will help you correctly answer multiple-choice items.

1. ***Circle or underline important words in the item.*** This will help you focus on the information most needed to identify the correct answer choice.
2. ***Read all the answer choices before selecting one.*** It is just as likely for the last answer choice to be correct as the first.
3. ***Cross out answer choices you are certain are not correct.*** This will help you narrow down the correct answer choice.
4. ***Look for two answer choices that are opposites.*** One of these two answer choices is likely to be correct.
5. ***Look for hints about the correct answer choice in other items on the test.*** The correct answer choice may be part of another item on the test.
6. ***Look for answer choices that contain language used by your teacher or found in your textbooks.*** An answer choice that contains such language is usually correct.
7. ***Do not change your initial answer unless you are sure another answer choice is correct.*** More often than not, your first choice is correct.
8. ***Choose "all of the above" if you are certain all other answer choices in the item are correct.*** Do not choose "all of the above" if even just one of the other answer choices is not correct.
9. ***Choose "none of the above" if you are certain all other answer choices in the item are incorrect.*** Do not choose "none of the above" if even just one of the other answer choices is correct.

Knowing how multiple-choice items are constructed and using these guidelines will help you improve your score on a multiple-choice test.