



Different Exam Formats

| | Preparing | Taking |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Problem Solving | The best way to prepare for problem-solving test is to solve problems—lots of them. Be sure to work problems not previously assigned. Work with a time limit. Aim to solve as many problems as you will have on the test within the test time limit (i.e., 30 problems in 50 minutes). | Start with the easier problems first. If you have no solution method, try the following: Try to write out an equation to express the relationships among all the givens and unknowns, accounting for all the data and facts in the problem. Work backwards. Ask yourself, “What do I need to get the answer?” Break a problem into a series of smaller problems, and then work each part. |
| Objective | List major themes and concepts. Make flash cards for frequent drills. Compare and contrast. Construct diagrams, tables or lists to summarize relationships. | Mark keywords in every question, especially ones that indicate how many answers there are. To find keywords, ask yourself what, who, where, when, and how. Stay on point! Avoid reading too much into the question. Do not make inferences about what is being asked - answer it as it is written. |
| Essay | Generate a list of main ideas or themes. Use relationship charts and summary sheets to generate a list of possible questions. Outline answers to as many as you can. | Pay attention to key words such as compare, explain, justify, and define . Make a rough outline of your answer. If you find yourself out of time on a question, quickly write an outline of the rest of your answer. The grader may give you partial credit for it. |
| Short Answer | Practice explaining concepts or diagrams out loud, to yourself, or a study partner. Without the help of your notes, recreate diagrams or graphs and explain what they mean. If you are expected to learn procedures and processes, memorize the number of steps. | Only answer what is being asked. Restate the question as a statement (on paper or in your head) and THEN write your answer. Reread the question and then your answer back to back and ask yourself: “Did I answer the question asked?” Use bulleted lists when writing out steps or stages. This will help you stay organized and make it easier for someone to grade your answer. Check the number of steps to make sure that you’re not missing something. |