

TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

These five tips may help you when answering true-false questions:

1. UNDERSTAND TRUE-FALSE SENTENCES

A true-false question is a statement that states some facts about a person, place or thing. Few true-false questions are written simply: they often include “traps”, so read carefully.

2. WATCH FOR QUANTIFIERS

Quantifiers are words that modify a statement by expressing amount, quality, degree or intensity.

All or *Nothing* words are usually false because not *all* birds can fly: *most* can but some can't –like penguins or ostriches.

One small word can make a huge difference in the basic true-false statement. Qualifiers may overstate a statement (all) or may understate it (none).

“All or none” words are also called 100% words and include:

No / Never / None / Every / Always / All / Only / Entirely / Invariably

These words are usually connected with a **false** statement because there are very few things in this world that are 100% in one way or the other.

What about “most”? Qualifiers such as “most” may be just right, but they may also overstate the true-false statement.

T *F* *Most snakes are poisonous.*

This one sounds as if it could be true, but it's actually false: of the three thousand kinds of snakes, only about 250 are poisonous: this is not *most*.

Think of qualifiers as a continuum:

AllMost.....Some.....None.....

Remember these suggestions when dealing with quantifiers in true-false statements:

- Circle all the quantifiers in the statement.
- If 100% words are used, the statement is probably false.

- If not 100%, substitute other quantifiers to see which one makes it just right.
If it is a different word from the one used on the text, the answer is false.

3. CHECK EACH PART OF THE STATEMENT

If any part of a true-false statement is false, then the entire statement is false.

Watch out for a statement that includes a list of items: one item in the list may make the statement false: read carefully! For example,

A warm-climate product, cocoa, is grown in the Gold Coast of Africa, Nigeria, British Columbia and Venezuela.

This statement includes a lot of true information, but one item, British Columbia in Canada, makes it false. Canada is not a warm-climate.

4. BEWARE OF NEGATIVE!

True-false statements that contain negative words or prefixes can be difficult to answer.

To help yourself, circle all negative words and prefixes in statements.

*Negative words include: **not** / **cannot** / **no***

*Negative prefixes include: **dis-** / **il-** / **im-** / **in-** / **non-** / **un-***

Always circle the negative words and prefixes in true-false statements!

5. IF YOU MUST GUESS – GUESS TRUE

If you cannot remember an answer and have tried these methods, but still can't figure out the answer, it is a good idea to guess, because you have a 50-50 chance of being right.

Because teachers want you to know what is true, most true-false questions are true.

Exception to the rule: If the teacher wants you to change a false statement into a true statement, this rule does not apply!