

Strategies for Different Test Formats

MATCHING:

- ❑ Matching usually consists of dates, people, places and vocabulary.
- ❑ Read the directions carefully.
- ❑ Read each column before you answer.
- ❑ Determine whether there are equal numbers of items in each column. Many times, instructors will include more items than necessary.
- ❑ Match what you know first.
- ❑ Cross off what you have already used, so that you no longer look toward it as an option.
- ❑ Use the process of elimination for the answers you might not be sure of.

TRUE-FALSE:

- ❑ Typically this is the trickiest of the testing formats.
- ❑ Read each statement carefully to determine whether it is true or not.
- ❑ Pay attention to words that could make a statement true, such as *few*, *some*, *many* or *often*.
- ❑ Pay attention to words that could make a statement false, such as *never*, *all*, *every*, or *only*.
- ❑ Pay attention to double negatives, such as *not unlawful*.
- ❑ Remember that if any part of a statement is false, then the entire statement is false.
- ❑ Answer every question, unless there is a penalty for guessing.
- ❑ At least, there is a 50/50 chance of answering the question correctly.

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

- ❑ Read every question and try to answer it before you read the answers provided.
- ❑ Look for similar answers; one of them is usually the correct response.
- ❑ Answers that contain extreme modifiers, such as *always*, *every*, and *never*, are in most cases incorrect.
- ❑ Cross-off answers that you know are incorrect.
- ❑ Even if you know that A is the correct answer, be sure to read all the options before selecting your answer.
- ❑ When the options are all numbers, usually the highest and lowest are incorrect.
- ❑ A joke is typically wrong.

- ❑ The most comprehensive answer is often correct.
- ❑ The longest answer is often correct.
- ❑ Don't linger on any questions. Sometimes other questions or answers can trigger the questions you missed.
- ❑ If you must, make an educated guess, and answer all questions unless there is a penalty for guessing.

SHORT ANSWER AND FILL-IN-THE-BLANKS:

- ❑ You are to supply the answer to a question or statement yourself.
- ❑ Read each question carefully, and be sure that you know what is being asked.
- ❑ Be brief in your response.
- ❑ Give the same number of answers as there are blanks.
- ❑ Don't assume that the length of the blank indicates the length of the correct answer.
- ❑ Your initial response is usually correct.
- ❑ Pay close attention to the word immediately preceding the blank. For example, if it is *an*, then your response will begin with a vowel.
- ❑ Look for key words in the sentence that may trigger your response.
- ❑ Be sure to reread the sentence with your response to decide whether your answer fits the statement.

ESSAY QUESTIONS:

- ❑ Essay tests can be the easiest of the test formats to take, because they provide you with the chance to show your instructor what you really know.
- ❑ Essay tests require you to supply an answer.
- ❑ Try to be as concise and informative as possible. Sometimes more is not always better. Your professor would rather see 1 page of intelligent and well-organized material than 5 pages of fluff.
- ❑ Always write a thesis statement for each answer.
- ❑ Be sure to outline your thoughts before you write.
- ❑ Watch spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- ❑ Use specific details, such as dates, places, people, where appropriate.
- ❑ Answer all parts of the question.
- ❑ When you conclude your answer, try to summarize your main points for clarity.
- ❑ Write neatly.
- ❑ Always proofread your answer.
- ❑ Stick to the facts; try to avoid overly opinionated answers.