

# Reading Comprehension Types

The Language Fellow

(Refer to GMAT Official Guide 2023-24)

## *Recognise stated ideas*

Find a passage's overall theme or point: The point of the Rain Forest passage is to list relationships between dependent variables and independent variables.

Find a specific detail: What did Tucci & Talaga discover about the probable cause of the increase in customer engagement for higher-priced restaurants?

Summarize a set of statements: Alaska faces an urgent need to address its economic dependence solely on oil and gas, its internal migrations and the need to conserve natural resources to preserve Inuit native culture.

Tell if an idea is stated or implied: Is it stated in the passage about conodonts that they were found to be the more ancient of the organism discussed?

Tell what a word or phrase means in context: In the context of the passage on municipal corporations above (AI-generated passage), what does 'zoning laws' mean?

## *Analyse reasoning structure*

Tell what argument technique someone uses: 'Argument from/by example' is one technique. Because SMEs have been known to benefit from leveraging AI for clerical data-entry tasks as reported in FICCI Report on SMEs, Kasturi & Sons should implement this strategy for its logistics department to cut costs.

Tell a statement's role in a passage: 'Roles' can be 'antecedent' and 'consequent' as seen in Tucci and Talaga passage.

## *Apply ideas in new contexts*

Decide which new situation is most like one in the passage: Transfer learning is one example.

Tell which new action would follow or break a rule in the passage: If evidence is discovered that beyond the archaeological remains excavated were structures that belonged to another culture, the civilisation in this geographic region would be different.

Decide which new example would best illustrate an idea in the passage: In error analysis, if I can infer that an LLM produced a hallucinated citation, somehow mixing up attributions, can I infer that a human probably made the same type of error.

### *Infer*

Decide which conclusion a passage most strongly supports: Can I conclude from the passage about Alaska that the US government is falling short of its commitment to Sustainable Goals when it comes particularly to its Arctic state?

Tell what follows logically from information given: He has been teaching this subject for so many years. Therefore, he must have learnt something about the subject.

Decide what a stated opinion implies: He has been teaching this subject for so many years. Therefore, he must have learnt something about the subject. However, I tend not to take it on its face-value without having my first-hand experience of this.

The above implies that the author will probably book a lesson with the teacher to test the teacher.

Recognize an author's attitude from word choices in a passage: He said, "The tea tasted so good, Sir." The speaker was the addressee's student.

What does "so good" tell us about the speaker's attitude? Can the speaker be Tom Riddle in conversation with Professor Slughorn? Or, can it be Harry speaking with Professor Lockhart?

Can I conclude here that context decides all of this?

### *Identify unstated assumptions*

Find an assumption an argument depends on: If the retina of a fly receives excessive light, a specially designed mechanism triggers an eyelid to protect it. Therefore, if I subjected the retina to this much amount of white light beyond the threshold, I will observe this phenomenon. However, the result does not turn out as expected.

The experimenter's assumption: the wavelengths I am using are the wavelengths that trigger the change.

Find an assumption that makes an argument's conclusion follow logically: An LLM generates a response revealing prohibited information in response to a prompt. It was concluded that the guardrails did not cover the particular element or elements the prompt contained.

The writer's assumption: The guardrails were effective for prompts that did not contain these new elements.

Tell what must happen for a plan to succeed: Alaska's native culture will be preserved from the recommendations **if and only if** environment conservation efforts lead to the natives' not migrating to urban areas or to the US.

*Evaluate hypotheses*

Decide what would most help explain why a plan failed: What explains students suddenly starting to score in the band 80% to 95% from 50% to 60%?

Decide what most likely caused an observed effect: The man has never been known to have missed a single class. He missed it on a particular day.

It must have been physically impossible for him to attend that day, **assuming that** there was no possibility of attending the class online.

Explain why a factor didn't cause its usual effect: The friends joked about a psychological truism:

My dog did not react to my showing him the stick while he usually does. Explanation: Pavlov missed a some crucial life lessons.

Decide which principle resolves a conflict between two opinions: There is a race condition in a variation on the Round Robin algorithm; the ranking, indexed separately, of the incoming HTTP requests resolve the deadlock.

Exercise: find the flaw if there is one in this one—Can there be such a variation on the Round Robin algorithm?

*Strengthen or weaken reasoning*

Tell which discovery would cast the most doubt on an argument's reasoning: The CXO's allegations regarding QA practices was bolstered after the discovery of a trail of irregularities over the last 5 years, not just the 2 years under consideration.

Tell what added evidence would best support a causal explanation: The electronic noise had a component that had its so far undetected source in a residual wireless interference. The noise, therefore, needed attenuation on different Fourier components.

*Identify reasoning flaws*

Decide which observation points to a reasoning flaw: The mix up in the antecedent and consequent in one of the choices for Tucci & Talaga's report on restaurants.

Tell which criticism an argument is most vulnerable to: If evidence is discovered that beyond the archaeological remains excavated were structures that belonged to another culture, the civilisation in this geographic region would be different.

Criticism: one cannot retroactively operate on reversing civilizational changes to disrupt the *status quo*.

*Identify points of disagreement*

Find the main implied point of disagreement in a dialogue between two people:

Speaker 1: The government must provide a more stable career after such a short-term commission.

Speaker 2: The government needs to account for fiscal constraints over the next century.

Speaker 1: To achieve this, the government cannot risk an individual's lifetime prospects.

Speaker 2: Individuals need to decide whether individuals matter more than what is at stakes.

Point of disagreement: the individual does not deserve risking lifetime prospects for short-term commissions.

*Solve a practical problem*

Find a way of sampling a population accurately despite an obstacle: See sampling methods. But don't take this literally—there can be other practical problems, I am sure.

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