

Domain 1 of 3

Overview

The GRE Verbal Reasoning section measures your ability to analyze and evaluate written material, synthesize information, and understand the relationships among words and concepts. Each section contains 27 questions to be answered in 41 minutes.

Question types include Reading Comprehension (approximately 50%), Text Completion (approximately 25%), and Sentence Equivalence (approximately 25%).

Text Completion

- One blank: 5 answer choices; two or three blanks: 3 choices each
- Read the entire sentence before selecting answers — blanks interact
- Look for signal words: contrast (however, although, despite), continuation (moreover, furthermore)
- Eliminate choices that create logical contradictions with the sentence
- For multi-blank questions, start with the blank you are most confident about

■ **Exam Tip:** In Text Completion, the correct answer must make the sentence logically and grammatically coherent. If you're unsure, try each answer and ask: "Does this make sense in context?"

Sentence Equivalence

- Select TWO answers that both complete the sentence AND create similar meanings
- Both answers must produce sentences with equivalent meanings — not just grammatically correct ones
- Look for synonym pairs among the answer choices as a starting point
- Eliminate answers that are too extreme, too mild, or logically inconsistent
- Common traps: one word fits grammatically but changes the sentence's meaning

Reading Comprehension

- Passage types: literary analysis, social sciences, natural sciences, humanities
- Question types: main idea, inference, author's purpose, strengthen/weaken, vocabulary in context
- Strategy: read for the main argument and structure, not every detail
- For "Select All That Apply" questions, each statement must be independently supported
- Highlight key transitions and topic sentences to navigate back to the passage

■ **Exam Tip:** Build your vocabulary systematically. Focus on high-frequency GRE words: abstruse, ameliorate, equivocal, laconic, obsequious, pellucid, recondite, sanguine, tendentious, vituperate.

High-Frequency GRE Vocabulary

The GRE tests sophisticated vocabulary in context. Rather than memorizing isolated definitions, learn words in sentences and focus on connotation (positive/negative/neutral) as well as denotation.

Essential Word Categories

- Words meaning "praise": laud, extol, lionize, panegyryze, encomium
- Words meaning "criticize": censure, excoriate, lambaste, vituperate, impugn
- Words meaning "unclear/ambiguous": equivocal, ambiguous, abstruse, recondite, opaque
- Words meaning "brief": laconic, terse, succinct, pithy, concise
- Words meaning "to improve": ameliorate, mitigate, palliate, alleviate, assuage