

## BASICS:

4 passages and 40 questions  
Time: 35 minutes  
Average time per passage: 8:45

### Order of Passages:

1. Literary Narrative
2. Social Sciences
3. Humanities
4. Natural Sciences

### KEY RESOURCES:

[ESM Reading Curriculum](#)

Question Types:

**Refer Questions** require you to locate information that is clearly stated in the passage.

**Reasoning Questions** require you to use your interpretation/understanding of the passage to answer complex questions.

## GENERAL STRATEGY:

1. Read the introduction to extract information regarding the author, time period, and definitions of any obscure terms that are used in the passage.
2. Read the passage in 3-5 minutes and circle all proper nouns, dates, numbers, and other key terms.
  - a. Your overall goal is to determine the main idea of a passage and how that main idea is developed throughout the passage.
3. While reading, annotate and make sure you understand:

<p><b><i>Literary Narrative</i></b>                      Character Traits and Plot                      Character opinions &amp; feelings                      Relationships between characters                      Narrator's tone</p>	<p><b><i>Social Studies, Humanities, Natural Science</i></b>                      Main Idea of body paragraphs                      Author's goal or intent                      Author's feelings toward topics he/she discusses</p>
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4. Read each question carefully and determine what the answer is in your own words.
5. Use your annotations, circled words or line references to locate necessary information.
6. Use the answer you came up with to eliminate wrong answer choices.
  - a. If any part of an answer choice is incorrect, eliminate it.
7. If you cannot eliminate three answer choices, select the best answer choice from those remaining and move on to the next question. Do not fixate on any one question for longer than one minute!

## EXTRA TIPS:

1. Embrace your inner cynic! Your goal is to find the least wrong answer choice. You are much more likely to find the correct answer when looking for what is wrong with each answer choice rather than what is right.
2. Make sure you fully understand the topic sentence of each body paragraph. When in doubt, refer to this sentence when answering a question that pertains to the paragraph.
3. Keep track of your timing, and have a backup plan! If you take too long on one passage and are short on time, try the Inside Out Strategy for the Natural Science Passage.
4. Don't give half of an effort when circling key words. Being thorough can change any difficult and time-consuming Refer question into a quick and easy one.
5. Beware of Time Wasters!
  - a. Any Refer question for which you cannot quickly locate the answer in the passage.
  - b. Any question that has an EXCEPT in it.
6. If you are faced with a Refer question without a key term that you would have circled, check if any answer choices contain key terms.
7. Beware of answer choices that contain extreme language (words like always, never, all, none, completely) or are outside the scope of the passage (these usually sound too good to be true).
8. Keep an eye out for predictive language and things listed in threes (very helpful for EXCEPT questions).

A mentor can change everything.

**ESM**  
PREP