

Multiple Choice Strategies, or, I wish I knew a magic trick!

AP English Language & Composition
Webinar

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When I'm not teaching and
grading (!!!), I'm crafting...

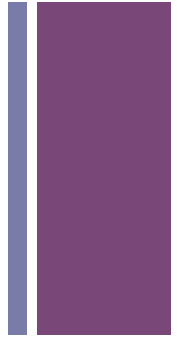
It's cheaper than therapy

and more fun 😊



+ All year long, practice close reading strategies...

- Decoding
- Summarizing and Paraphrasing
- Annotating
- SOAPStone, rhetorical situation
- Decoding the prompt
- BAISE
 - big idea (topic, distal view)
 - analyze (author's strategies)
 - infer (implied meaning, effect on audience)
 - synthesize (rule of three—the pieces of evidence from different parts of the text, working to the same purpose)
 - evaluate (conclusion about author's purpose or style)
- Vocabulary

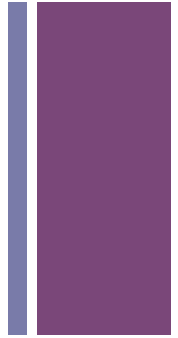


+ Reading Test Strategies

1. Pay attention to contextual information for clues (Ex: The following passage is from an essay published in the late twentieth century).
2. Skim the question stems, but not the answers—4/5 answers are wrong.
3. Read the end of the passage first.
4. Read the entire passage carefully, pausing often to summarize and/or annotate.

+ Timing

- The clock is your friend.
- Use every minute of your allotted time. With four different passages, you have 15 minutes per passage; with five different passages, you have 12 minutes per passage.
- Spend 5-7 minutes reading and re-reading.
- Always answer the question in your head before you look at the answer choices.
- Spend 30 seconds on most questions.

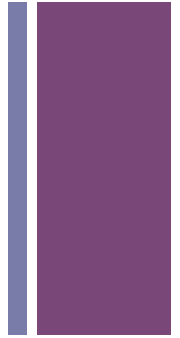


- + Here is the advice I give, as I give it, to my students:

Multiple Choice

- You do NOT have an hour of multiple choice...

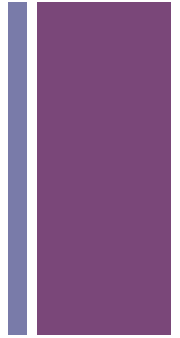




You HAVE

- Five or six...
- 10-12-minute tests

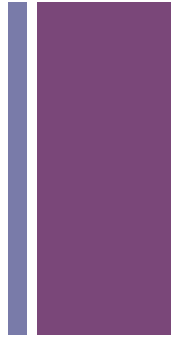




Be the best you can be

- For 10-12 minutes
- Every single time

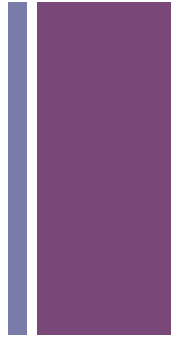




On each passage,
spend 5-7 minutes reading
well

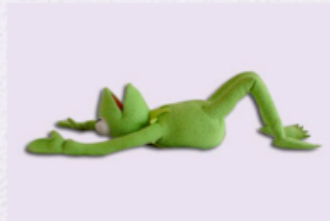
- Then you already know the answers to most of the questions—you only need 6 or so minutes to do the multiple choice part for each section

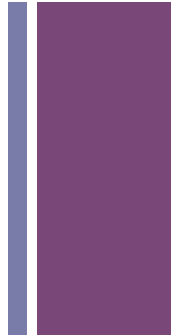




Stretch

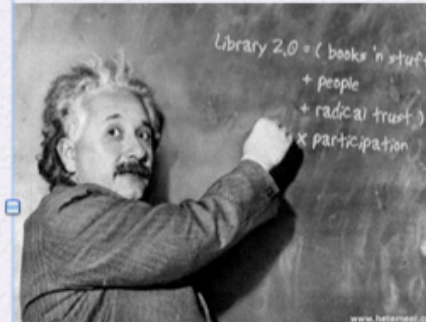
- For 15 seconds after each reading section
- Cross your arms and legs—activate both sides of your brain—you need every brain cell 😊
- Rub your head (this action makes you think more clearly)

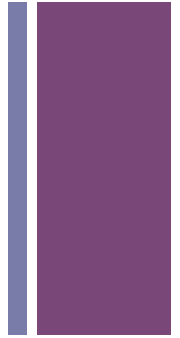




Trust yourself

- First answer the question in your head—before you see the answer choices
- No second-guessing
- Answer every question
- Use process of elimination when your answer does not immediately appear
- Stick with your time plan!



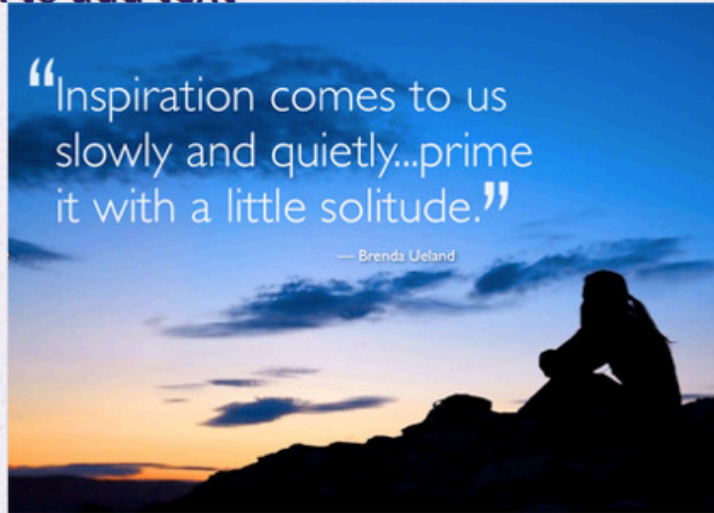


Be the best YOU that YOU can Be

- Click to add text

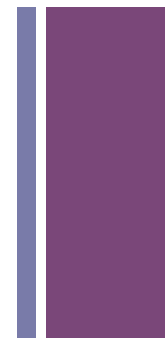
“Inspiration comes to us
slowly and quietly...prime
it with a little solitude.”

— Brenda Ueland



+ 50%/+ Club

- I once gave students a handout to chart their progress—number of questions, number correct, advice for next time...
- Then I discovered that, for all their interest in quantifying themselves, they are NOT interested in keeping up with this chart.
- This year, I created the 50% Plus Club.
 - I explained the magic of getting 50% (or more) of the questions correct.
 - Two students are now tied for the most times appearing in this elite club.
 - When we do the paired activity, I make sure we celebrate the 50%Plussers and encourage students to pair with someone from that club.



+ Paired Test-taking

- Side notes:
 - We do a handful of multiple choice practices in fall semester.
 - Starting in January, we enjoy Multiple Choice Mondays.
 - For the first three months, we do a passage each week from *Five Steps to a Five* for AP English Language.
 - For April and May, we use passages from old AP exams.
- About every third week, we do paired test-taking. “We’re all in this together! Teach your friend your best strategy. Stand up for your answer choice.”

+ Think Like a Test-maker

- Using a passage from the unit's readings, students...
 - Work with a friend to design four Multiple-Choice-style questions.
 - *Five Steps to a Five*, Murphy and Rankin, eds., 2011 (p 45), identifies four basic types of questions: Factual, Technical, Analytical, Inferential.

Factual	Technical	Analytical	Inferential
Allusions	Syntax	Shift	Connotation
Antecedents	Style	Strategy	Tone
Pronoun Ref.	Technique	Reasoning	Implications

- Students design one of each type of question and include two choices—the correct answer and a good distraction.

+ Pop-Up Debate to Defend Answers

(Thanks to Dr. Cheryl Nahmias, our IB/Instructional Coach)

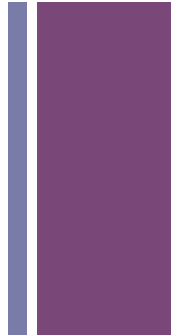
Rules of Pop-Up Debate

1. First person to stand up and speak gets the floor.
2. Speaker faces the audience as much as possible.
3. You may only stand up twice before everyone has spoken at least once.
4. As always, respond to "louder please" by speaking louder.

+ When you speak in Pop-Up Debate, have...

1. Clearly stated claim
2. Evidence from the reading
3. Reasoning that connects the evidence to the question
4. Summary of your argument

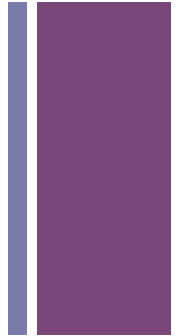
And thus we reinforce argument.



+ To employ effective rhetoric:

- **P**oise (get rid of distracting, um, behaviors)
- **V**oice (everyone hears you, all the time)
- **L**ife (can you feel it? can your audience?)
- **E**ye Contact (every person, every speech)
- **G**estures (speak with more than your mouth)
- **S**peed (for effect)

And thus we reinforce speaking skills...





Thank you!

Very best wishes to you and yours on the May 11 exam—