PRACTICAL AND FINANCIAL LITERACY

Multiple-Choice Elimination Strategies

Difficulty level: Easy

Practical and Financial Literacy

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Overview of the concept

This is how you raise your odds on a multiple choice question by crossing out the answers that cannot be true, so the right one is easier to spot. Even when you do not know the answer straight away, you can often rule out one or two choices, and that turns a wild guess into a good chance. You use it on tests and exams, on a driving theory test, or on any quiz where a careful look at the options is worth marks.



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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q What is 12 × 8? A: 86, B: 96, C: 106, D: 9.6.

SOLUTION

Cross out what cannot be true first. 12 × 8 must be bigger than 12, and 9.6 is smaller than 12, so D cannot be the answer. The rest are all close in size, so work it out: 10 × 8 = 80 and 2 × 8 = 16

80 + 16 = 96

That leaves B: 96

EXAMPLE 2

Q Which is a mammal? Shark, dolphin, penguin, lizard.

SOLUTION

Read the key word first: mammal. Then rule out each option that fails that definition, one by one.

A shark is a fish, a penguin is a bird, and a lizard is a reptile. The option left standing is the dolphin, even if you were unsure at first.

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Practice questions

1

What is 15 × 6? Options:
80
90
100
9.0
Which option is easiest to eliminate first?

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2

What is 8 × 6? Options:
37
48
57
4.8
Which options can you cross out because they are odd?

A 37 and 57

B 48 and 4.8

C 37 and 48

D 57 and 4.8

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3 **Which statement is most likely wrong?**

A Some birds migrate

B All birds fly

C Many birds sing

D Birds have feathers

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4 **How many months are in a year?**
Which two options mean the same thing, so neither can be the one right answer?

A 12 and a dozen

B 10 and 52

C 12 and 10

D a dozen and 52

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5

You know a whale is a mammal. Which of these are mammals?

A Dog only

B Whale only

C Bat only

D All of the above

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6

What is 48 × 11? Options:
428
528
5280
52.8
Estimate first, then cross out the two options the estimate rules out.

A 428 and 528

B 5280 and 52.8

C 428 and 52.8

D 528 and 5280

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7

Which of these is NOT a fruit?

A Apple

B Carrot

C Banana

D Grape

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8

You cover the options and work out 9 × 7 = 63 in your head before looking. Why does that help?

A You are not pulled toward a wrong option that looks close

B You can skip reading the question

C You get extra marks for working it out first

D The options change when you cover them

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9 What is elimination in a multiple-choice question?

- A Crossing out the options that cannot be right
- B Picking the longest option
- C Guessing the first option
- D Reading only the last option

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10 You eliminate two of four options. What are your odds now?

- A 1 in 2
- B 1 in 4
- C 1 in 3
- D 3 in 4

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ANSWER KEY

1. 9.0

2. 37 and 57

3. All birds fly

4. 12 and a dozen

5. All of the above

6. 5280 and 52.8

7. Carrot

8. You are not pulled toward a wrong option that looks close

9. Crossing out the options that cannot be right

10. 1 in 2

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