

10 Strategies to Ace the SAT Reading

- 1. Annotate the meaning of the text as you read.**
 - a. It's easy to get stuck or zone out if you try to understand line by line. It's better to focus on the bigger picture.
 - b. Circle key terms, star central claims, note any shifts in tone or topic.
 - c. Specific details don't really matter on this test. Focus on how these details shape *overall meaning*.
- 2. Read as if you're affected by what is being said. Try to care to stay engaged. Ask yourself:**
 - a. Why was it written? Why is it important? How does it affect me?
- 3. For vocabulary-in-context questions:**
 - a. Read the questions before and after the sentence.
 - b. Never answer the question without referring to the text.
 - c. Note the connotation of the word (+ or -) to eliminate choices
- 4. For evidence-based reading questions (paired questions) → work backwards!**
 - a. Read the lines referenced in the 2nd of the paired questions
 - b. Try to match with an answer choice in the 1st of the pair
- 5. Pay special attention to transition words to follow the author's flow of ideas.**
 - a. Contrast indicated by "however," "but," etc.
- 6. Be skeptical of answer choices that seem too obvious.**
 - a. Don't automatically choose an answer choice that has a word in it that's also in the question. Make sure to always use the process of elimination if the answer choices are specific line references.
- 7. For paired passages, identify their relationship:**
 - a. Total Disagreement: + or -
 - b. Alternatives: Same goal but different approaches
- 8. Try to think like the test writers.**
 - a. Take practice tests.
 - b. Ask yourself: What are they trying to get me to understand?
 - i. Focus on author's tone, attitude, purpose, and main idea
- 9. Understand why you got the question wrong. Do you consistently make the same mistakes? Common reasons for wrong answers:**
 - a. Misread
 - b. Correct answer but doesn't answer the question
- 10. Read the entire passage first before answering the questions.**
 - a. Most questions require inference, not specific recall, so it's better to understand the overall meaning of the passage