

# The Strengthen vs. MSS Deep Dive

Ahh... the age old questions of the Strengthen vs. MSS question stem. Many students have trouble recognizing the difference between Strengthen and MSS because both of their question stems often use the word “support.” It can be confusing, but the difference between Strengthen and MSS question stems is actually no big deal.

Here’s the reliable difference between the two question stems:

	DIFFERENCE	EXPLANATION
MSS Question Stem	“if all of the <i>above</i> is true”	<p><b>The MSS question stem asks us to assume the stimulus is true.</b></p> <p>MSS wants you to work from the stimulus to see which answer choice is proven. We have to assume the stimulus is true in order use it to prove the correct answer, so the MSS question stem fits.</p>
Strengthen Question Stem	“the <i>following</i> , if true”	<p><b>The Strengthen question stem asks us to assume the answer choices are true.</b></p> <p>You have to apply each Strengthen answer choice to the stimulus to find the powerful helping hand, which is kinda impossible if you’re questioning the truth of the answer choices. So it makes sense to assume the answer choices are true on Strengthen questions.</p>