

Study Guide for Verbal Reasoning

1. Reading Comprehension (RC)

This is the most critical section. Your approach should be strategic, not just passive reading.

1.1 The Strategic Reading Process

- **Skim First:** Spend 60 seconds skimming. Read the **first and last paragraphs** and the **opening sentence of every other paragraph**. This gives you the passage's structure, main idea, and tone.
- **Identify the Core Idea:** Constantly ask, "What is the author's main point?"
- **Note Keywords & Tone:** Pay attention to transition words (e.g., *however, therefore, although, but*) and words that reveal the author's tone (e.g., *critically, unfortunately, thankfully*).

1.2 Types of RC Questions & How to Tackle Them

- **Main Idea / Primary Purpose:** Ask, "Why did the author write this?" The answer is usually in the opening or concluding paragraphs. Choose the most general option that covers the entire passage.
- **Specific Detail / Fact-Based:** The answer is explicitly stated. Use your mental map from skimming to locate the relevant section. Look for keywords like "According to the passage..."
- **Inference / "Suggests" or "Implies":** The answer is a logical conclusion, not directly stated but *must be true*. Eliminate options that are too extreme or beyond the passage's scope.
- **Author's Tone / Attitude:** Is the author supportive, critical, neutral, analytical, or sarcastic? Look at adjectives and adverbs.
- **Vocabulary in Context:** Use the sentence's context to determine the word's meaning, which may differ from its common dictionary definition.

2. Para Jumbles (Sentence Rearrangement)

The goal is to arrange 4–5 sentences into a coherent paragraph.

2.1 The 4-Step Strategy

1. **Find the Opening Sentence:** It introduces the main topic, is general, and avoids pronouns (e.g., *he, it, they*) or connectors (e.g., *but, so, and*).
2. **Identify Mandatory Pairs:** Look for:
 - **Noun-Pronoun:** A noun (e.g., "Ravi") comes before its pronoun (e.g., "He").
 - **Cause & Effect:** A cause precedes its effect.
 - **Chronological Order:** Events follow time sequence.
 - **Idea-Example:** An idea precedes its example.
3. **Use Transition Words:** Key clues include:
 - **Contrast:** *however, but, on the other hand*.
 - **Conclusion:** *therefore, thus, hence, so*.

- **Addition:** *also, additionally, furthermore.*
 - **Example:** *for instance, for example.*
4. **Find the Concluding Sentence:** It summarizes, offers a solution, or concludes without introducing new information.

3. Sentence Correction / Error Spotting

Identify the grammatically incorrect part or choose the best replacement. Use this checklist:

3.1 Top 5 Errors to Check

1. Subject-Verb Agreement (SVA):

- Singular subjects like *each, every, either, neither, one* take singular verbs (e.g., “Each of the boys **is** here.”).
- “*A number of*” takes a plural verb; “*The number of*” takes a singular verb.
- With *either/or* or *neither/nor*, the verb agrees with the nearer subject (e.g., “Neither the manager nor the employees **were** present.”).

2. Pronoun Errors:

- Pronouns must agree with their antecedent in number (e.g., “Every student must bring **his or her** book.”).
- Avoid ambiguous pronouns with multiple possible antecedents.

3. Parallelism:

- Lists, comparisons, or series must use the same grammatical form.
- Incorrect: “I like running, swimming, and **to hike**.”
- Correct: “I like running, swimming, and **hiking**.”

4. Misplaced Modifiers:

- Descriptive phrases must be next to the word they describe.
- Incorrect: “Covered in mud, the owner gave his dog a bath.”
- Correct: “The owner gave his dog, which was covered in mud, a bath.”

5. Tense Consistency:

- Avoid unnecessary tense shifts within a sentence or paragraph.

4. Vocabulary

Focus on strategic approaches for exams.

- **Synonyms & Antonyms:** Use the process of elimination. Identify positive or negative connotations to narrow options.
- **Idioms & Phrases:** Learn the contextual meaning of the 100–200 most common idioms.
- **Analogies:** Identify the relationship in the first pair:
 - **Part to Whole:** Finger : Hand

- **Cause to Effect:** Virus : Illness
- **Type of:** Orange : Fruit
- **Tool to Worker:** Scalpel : Surgeon
- **Degree of Intensity:** Warm : Hot

5. Critical Reasoning

- **Argument:** Consists of a **Premise** (evidence/fact) and a **Conclusion** (main point).
- **Assumption:** An unstated link connecting premise to conclusion, necessary for the argument's logic.
- **Strengthen/Weaken Questions:** Strengthen by supporting the assumption; weaken by attacking it.
- **Inference:** A conclusion that *must be true* based on premises, taking a small logical step.