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See page 7 for details.

Manhattan GMAT[®] Prep

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2007
EDITION

READING COMPREHENSION

GMAT Preparation Guide

This in-depth guide takes the mystery out of complex reading passages by providing a toolkit of sketching techniques that aim to build comprehension, speed, and accuracy. Learn to identify the underlying structures of reading passages and develop methods to tackle the toughest comprehension questions.

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A large, black, stylized letter 'g' in a serif font, positioned on the left side of the page. The letter has a thick stroke and a small loop at the top right.

READING COMPREHENSION

Verbal Preparation Guide

This in-depth guide takes the mystery out of complex reading passages by providing a toolkit of sketching techniques that aim to build comprehension, speed, and accuracy. Learn to identify the underlying structure of reading passages and develop methods to tackle the toughest comprehension questions.

Reading Comprehension GMAT Preparation Guide, 2007 Edition

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HOW OUR GMAT PREP BOOKS ARE DIFFERENT

One of our core beliefs at Manhattan GMAT is that a curriculum should be more than just a guidebook of tricks and tips. Scoring well on the GMAT requires a curriculum that builds true content knowledge and understanding. Skim through this guide and this is what you will see:

You will *not* find page after page of guessing techniques.

Instead, you will find a highly organized and structured guide that actually teaches you the content you need to know to do well on the GMAT.

You *will* find many more pages-per-topic than in all-in-one tomes.

Each chapter covers one specific topic area in-depth, explaining key concepts, detailing in-depth strategies, and building specific skills through Manhattan GMAT's *In-Action* problem sets (with comprehensive explanations). Why are there 8 guides? Each of the 8 books (5 Math, 3 Verbal) covers a major content area in extensive depth, allowing you to delve into each topic in great detail. In addition, you may purchase only those guides that pertain to those areas in which you need to improve.

This guide is challenging - it asks you to do more, not less.

It starts with the fundamental skills, but does not end there; it also includes the *most advanced content* that many other prep books ignore. As the average GMAT score required to gain admission to top business schools continues to rise, this guide, together with the 6 computer adaptive online practice exams and bonus question bank included with your purchase, provides test-takers with the depth and volume of advanced material essential for achieving the highest scores, given the GMAT's computer adaptive format.

This guide is ambitious - developing mastery is its goal.

Developed by Manhattan GMAT's staff of REAL teachers (all of whom have 99th percentile official GMAT scores), our ambitious curriculum seeks to provide test-takers of all levels with an in-depth and carefully tailored approach that enables our students to achieve mastery. If you are looking to learn more than just the "process of elimination" and if you want to develop skills, strategies, and a confident approach to any problem that you may see on the GMAT, then our sophisticated preparation guides are the tools to get you there.

1. INTRODUCTION TO PASSAGES & METHODS	11
2. SHORT PASSAGES	17
3. LONG PASSAGES	25
4. THE SEVEN STRATEGIES	35
5. QUESTION ANALYSIS	43
6. PASSAGES & PROBLEM SETS	59
In Action Passages & Questions	61
In Action Solutions	77
Official Guide Problem Set	115

TABLE OF CONTENTS



g

Chapter 1

of

READING COMPREHENSION

INTRODUCTION TO
PASSAGES & METHODS



In This Chapter . . .

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- Reading Passage Features
- The Problem: You Read It But Don't Understand It
- The Solution: Don't Just Read, Do Something!

READING PASSAGE FEATURES

Reading Comprehension questions are generally familiar to most students from other standardized tests. You are shown a passage that consists of two or more paragraphs and asked questions that require you to understand the substance of the passage.

You can expect to see **4** Reading Comprehension passages on the GMAT. Each passage will typically be accompanied by 3 to 4 questions, for a total of 12 to 14 Reading Comprehension questions.

There are a number of features related to GMAT Reading Comprehension passages that you should be aware of:

All Passages are either Long or Short. GMAT Reading Comprehension passages come in two basic forms: LONG and SHORT. Long passages generally consist of four to five short paragraphs or three medium-length paragraphs, and are more than 50 lines on the computer screen in length (or over 35 lines in *The Official Guide for GMAT Review, 11th Edition* and *The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review*). Examples of long passages on the GMAT appear on pages 346, 350, and 360 of *The Official Guide for GMAT Review, 11th Edition*.

Short passages generally consist of two or three short paragraphs, and are fewer than 50 lines on the computer screen in length (or under 35 lines in *The Official Guide for GMAT Review, 11th Edition* and *The Official Guide for GMAT Verbal Review*). Examples of short passages on the GMAT appear on pages 348, 352, and 354 of *The Official Guide for GMAT Review, 11th Edition*. It is important to immediately recognize whether a passage is Long or Short as one's approach to each type of passage should be different.

Short passages have been more common on the GMAT in the past several years than Long passages. Of the four passages that you see on the GMAT, 3 of them are likely to be Short and 1 of them Long. However, there is no set order in the appearance of Short and Long passages.

Questions Appear One at a Time. Due to the computerized format of the exam, the questions are presented one at a time on the right side of the computer screen, while the complete reading passage remains on the left side of the screen throughout. Since questions are presented one at a time, and you cannot return to any question after answering it, you will only be able to see the first question prior to reading the passage.

The Number of Questions per Passage is NOT stated. The GMAT does NOT indicate how many questions are associated with a particular passage (i.e. there is NO language on the GMAT indicating that "Questions 6-9 refer to the following passage."). However, there is a very strong correlation between the length of the passage and the number of questions associated with it. Generally, each Short passage will have 3 questions associated with it, and each Long passage will have 4 questions associated with it. This is one reason why it is important to recognize whether a passage is Long or Short.

In order to determine your reading approach, first identify whether a passage is Long or Short.

Line Numbers are Not Listed. Though the Official Guide and older GMAT tests list line numbers down the side of each paragraph, the GMAT now does not number the lines in each passage. If a GMAT question wants to indicate the location of a particular term or phrase in the passage, it will highlight that term in the passage text as the question appears.

We will discuss other features of GMAT Reading Comprehension passages and questions in the sections that follow.

The Problem: You Read It But Don't Understand It

Most people, when reading a GMAT Reading Comprehension passage, have an experience something like this:

You quickly read the first paragraph of the passage. You then scan the second and third paragraphs, which blend into the first paragraph. After a couple of minutes spent reading, you finish the passage and turn to the first question.

You understand what you have just read in a general way, but not to a level where you have confidence to answer the first question right away. You are forced to re-read the parts of the passage that you think are relevant to the first question. After you re-read these sections a couple of times, your understanding builds to a point that you feel you can answer the question.

You repeat this process for each question. Often, you answer every question that relates to a particular passage without ever feeling like you understood the passage.

Most individuals, when faced with a Reading Comprehension passage, simply read the passage and then try to answer the relevant questions. There are several potential problems with this approach, but the main problem is that the time spent initially reading the passage is unproductive and does not facilitate genuine comprehension. As a result, one must essentially re-read the passage several times to answer even general questions about the passage.

This is primarily a function of how reading and understanding relate to each other. Reading words and understanding the substance of the the sentences or paragraphs that they form are very different processes. The vast majority of people cannot understand the substance of academic prose by simply reading words on a page or screen.

Unlike the *Official Guide For GMAT Review*, the GMAT exam will NOT indicate how many questions to expect for a given passage.

The Solution: Don't Just Read, Do Something!

There are three general methods that we use to learn something new:

1. We read, as when we read a college textbook (or this guide).
2. We write, as when we take notes during a college lecture.
3. We listen, as during a lecture in a college course.

On the GMAT, we are asked to quickly read and synthesize passages of text. However, it is possible to build your comprehension more quickly by incorporating more than one learning method into your approach to these passages.

The key to quickly building comprehension is to WRITE something as you read. If you write down certain key elements as you read, you will build your understanding of each passage much more quickly and thoroughly. Writing activates a second learning process that facilitates comprehension. Identifying and writing elements of the passage will force you to read ACTIVELY as opposed to passively, dramatically improving the pace and depth of your comprehension.

Of course, it is not possible to re-write an entire passage in the time allocated for Reading Comprehension questions. But even writing and summarizing selected key elements will give you an understanding of the structure and main points of a passage while saving you time to answer questions about the passage.

During the chapters ahead you will learn WHAT to write down as you read a GMAT reading passage.

Become an
ACTIVE reader by
writing as you read
each passage.

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COMMENTS FROM GMAT TEST TAKERS:

"Bravo, Manhattan GMAT! Bravo! The guides truly did not disappoint. All the guides are clear, concise, and well organized and explained things in a manner that made it possible to understand things the first time through without missing any of the important details."

"I've thumbed through a lot of books that don't even touch these. The fact that they're split up into components is immeasurably helpful. The set-up of each guide and the lists of past GMAT problems make for an incredibly thorough and easy to follow study path"

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- 4. THE SEVEN STRATEGIES:**
Point System, Key Word Matching, Proof Sentences, Word Justification, Extremes, Limiting Inferences, Previewing
- 5. QUESTION ANALYSIS:**
General vs. Specific, Main Idea, Supporting Detail, Inference, Tone, Structure

About The Authors:

Manhattan GMAT's 8 preparation guides were developed by its talented staff of real teachers, all of whom have scored in the 99th percentile on the official GMAT. As the company focuses solely on the GMAT (no other tests), it continually updates the guides to reflect the GMAT's most current trends. Questions are refined and strategies enhanced, blending the academic and test-taking skills that have been essential to the success of Manhattan GMAT students around the world.

The nation's largest GMAT-exclusive preparation provider, Manhattan GMAT was founded by Zeke Vanderhoek. A Yale graduate, Zeke taught as a member of Teach for America at a New York City public junior high school, earned a Masters in Philosophy & Education from Columbia University's Teachers College, and supplemented his day job by tutoring individuals in various subjects at all educational levels. Word-of-mouth referrals soon brought in a remarkably high number of GMAT test-takers, and thus Manhattan GMAT and its prep guides were born.

Comments From GMAT Test Takers:

"I found the Manhattan GMAT guides to be light years beyond their competitor's material. The guides provide great strategies and explanations and, most importantly, a real foundation for me to achieve a great score."

"These guides are written extraordinarily well. They break down key concepts into understandable units. I am impressed at how well they simplify the toughest GMAT concepts."

"I really like the way the books are divided by subject matter. It helped to keep the concepts separate and allowed me to focus on each more efficiently."

Manhattan GMAT Prep provides intensive classes, private tutoring, one-day workshops, free seminars, and online instruction to students around the world. Learn from Manhattan GMAT's expert instructors—real teachers with 99th percentile official GMAT scores. Visit us online or call us today to learn more.

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