

# GENERAL ABILITY TO REACH FOR EXAM *Success!*



## Map out questions and come to solutions

- › Build your reasoning skills for the exam with twenty original and challenging practice questions! All with detailed explanations.
- › Techniques to help you avoid the common exam pitfalls and step-by-step explanations of the logic behind the really difficult questions.
- › Strategies to help you clarify and simplify the many different types of general ability questions and to recognise variations.



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# 1 General Ability

## 1.1 Introduction

General ability tests are a critical part of assessing your intellectual aptitude. They give a good indication of an individual's competency in regards to understanding information, problem solving and dealing with situations in a logical manner. Students who excel in this area of assessment are highly regarded and have significant advantages when it comes to sitting for entrance exams or scholarship testing.

The primary focus of the general ability assessment is to test how quickly and logically you are able to solve a problem. You may be presented with an array of information and assumptions. Most questions will require you to break down the information and piece together the clues. It is almost like working on a jigsaw puzzle.

For the more challenging questions, there are usually short-cuts that will allow you to speedily and logically arrive at a correct judgment. It is therefore of crucial importance that you undertake a large amount of practice with reasoning tests in order to prepare your mind for the varying levels of difficulty.

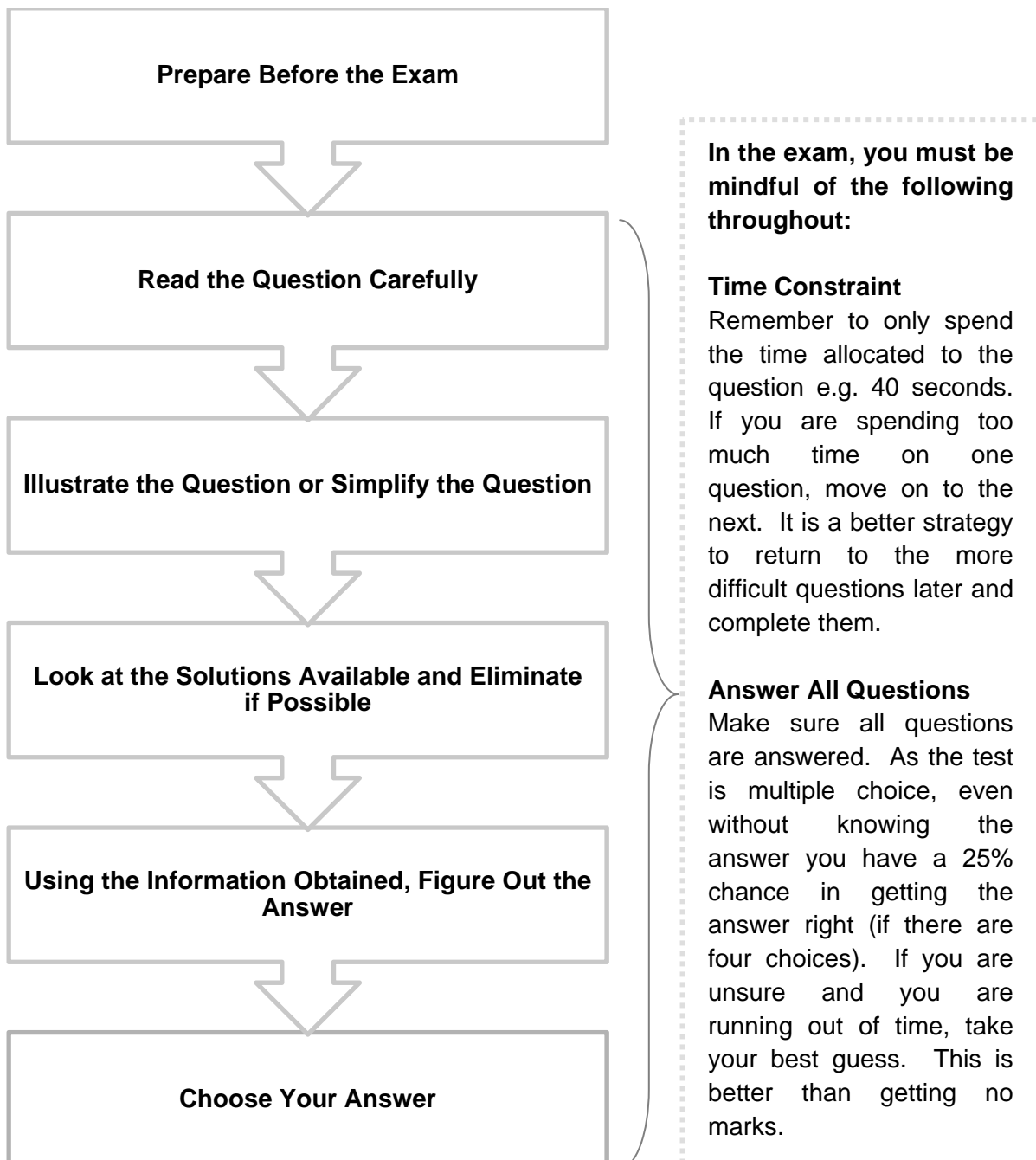
There are two core areas in general ability tests; numerical reasoning and verbal reasoning. Numerical reasoning questions test your ability to work with numbers and mathematical concepts in order to find a solution to a problem. Verbal reasoning questions test your ability to understand and reason using ideas that are expressed using words or letters. Rather than evaluating your level of fluency, expression and vocabulary, you are required to demonstrate critical thinking skills in order to arrive at a correct answer.

This book will assist you in preparing for the exam through explaining the logic behind such questions and bringing to light some of the strategies that you can use to work out a solution.

**Remember, the most important thing to do in any test is to read the question carefully!**

## 1.2 Approach

An approach to answering multiple general ability questions in a limited time frame rests with good preparation and excellent exam technique. An approach to both verbal and numerical reasoning questions (shown below) will now be illustrated for a general ability test containing 60 questions to be answered in 40 minutes. This means that you should be looking to complete each question in 40 seconds.



# Is it a Numerical Reasoning Type Question or a Verbal Reasoning Type Question?

It is common to come across **numerical based questions** in a general ability test. So how do you know when the question is a numerical reasoning question? The answer is simple. Firstly, in a numerical reasoning question, numerical figures must be present. They may be in the form of Arabic numbers, statistics, units (e.g. kilometre) or worded numbers (three instead of 3). Secondly, a pattern or numerical relationship exists. The relationship may algebraic, or it may just be a simple number pattern. A pattern is there for you to identify certain relationships and characteristics of the figures given. These pieces of information will assist you in finding the correct answer. Thirdly, you may also see that they are less straightforward than pure mathematical questions.

In contrast, verbal reasoning questions require you to make logical judgments. You cannot simply identify the answer in the given information, instead you may have to work out or deduce your answer based on the clues given.

Some key indicators of verbal reasoning questions:

## **Presence of letters**

Verbal reasoning involves critical thinking of concepts with words. Expect letters.

## **Find the meaning of a word**

A question may ask you to find a synonym (a word with similar meaning) or antonym (a word with opposite meaning). You will be expected to know the meaning of the word.

## **The solution options are usually words**

As the questions involve concepts with words, expect the solutions to be in words as well. However, this is not always the case as you may be asked to find a numerical answer based on verbal reasoning skills.

You may or may not be familiar with the different types of verbal reasoning questions. If you are, bear in mind that not all questions will fall within your expected range and not all exams are predictable. **Do prepare yourself for a range of possibilities.**

## 2.5 Identify When Something Occurs Among a Series of Options

Typically, these types of questions are about establishing the order in which things occur or working out when a particular event or specification occurs among a series of options. Usually there are often multiple characteristics for you to consider so to answer these questions successfully, it is imperative that you organise the information that you are given.

These questions test your logic, ability to place events in time, and ability to think about concepts such as more/less, before/after etc... They also require the ability to mentally arrange abstract information, which can be greatly helped by your use of visual diagrams.

In the exam, you can identify these types of questions by looking for terms such as:

**Faster                  Smaller                  Most                  Least                  First                  Last**

These type of questions can also be identified by short paragraphs describing situations involving a number of characteristics. In the example below, characteristics are things like, what type of boat, what colour is the boat etc...

“In the boat race there were five boats. Boat One, Boat Four and Boat Five are yachts, Boat Two is a tugboat and Boat Three is a sailing ship. Boat One is red, Boat Two and Boat Four are grey, Boat Three and Boat Five are orange”

To help you solve these questions quickly, it is a good idea to organise information if that information is complex. It is recommended that you use tables to do this. See the below example using the boat information above.

		<b>Put characteristic here E.g. Type of boat</b>		
		Yatch	Tugboat	Sailing Ship
<b>Put other characteristic here. E.g. Colour</b>	Red	Boat One		
	Grey	Boat Four	Boat Two	
	Orange	Boat Five		Boat Three

**Question 15**

Which shop provides the worst value for money per kilogram of beef?

- (a) Shop A
- (b) Shop B
- (c) Shop C
- (d) Shop D
- (e) None of the above

**Question 16**

In which shop would you get twice the mass of beef as at shop A for half the price?

- (a) Shop E
- (b) Shop B
- (c) Shop C
- (d) Shop D
- (e) None of the above

**Question 17**

Suppose shop C sells their beef at \$5 per kilogram. Which shop sells their beef for \$2.50 per kilogram?

- (a) Shop A
- (b) Shop B
- (c) Shop D
- (d) Shop E
- (e) None of the above

**The next 2 questions are based on the following information.**

The combination of a safe contains 4 digits. It is known that:

Zero is not one of the digits. The first digit is larger than the third digit, but smaller than the second digit. The fourth digit is twice as large as the first digit. The third digit is an even number.



## 4.2 Detailed Solutions

Question	Detailed Solution
1	Correct answer is B. The letters are rearranged on a rotating basis. Following AHUD, A replaces D, and every other letter shifts to the left. This is continued until all the letters are returned to their original position, AHUD.
2	Correct answer is D. Question is a form of expression. Black is a type of colour. We are looking for the properties of these words.
3	The correct answer is B. Hour is made up of minutes. A day is made up of hours. A country is made up of cities. The earth therefore consists of countries.
4	Correct answer is A. Since tabby cats with blue eyes are more valuable than black cats with blue eyes, and green eyes are inferior than blue eyes, option A is correct.
5	The correct answer is C. Skilful is an adjective. The rest are nouns.
6	The correct answer is B. Certified and qualified both mean that something or somebody has met the criteria for satisfaction. If you don't know this, please consult a reliable dictionary. Also, check the dictionary for the other options presented so that you can see why they are not the correct solution.
7	The correct answer is E. <i>Adung musti</i> means <i>do not have</i> , however in the second sentence <i>adung</i> is used only by itself to mean <i>have</i> .
8	The correct answer is E. Brake is a feature of a vehicle, whereas options 'a', 'b', 'c' and 'd' are different types of transportation.
9	The correct answer is C. We are looking for a word that describes the purpose of rubber. Detergent is used to wash, therefore rubber is used to erase.
10	The correct answer is B. The first column consists of nouns. The second column consists of verbs related to the nouns. The third column consists of

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## How will you rate? Prepare with **Exam Success!**

**General Ability to Reach for Exam Success** provides you with invaluable strategies to assist you in solving various types of questions. Hone your skills with twenty original practice questions along with detailed explanations to enhance your understanding.

*“Vi helped me to prepare for my exam in June 2011. I had been to so many other tutoring colleges before that – however, I found that Exam Success helped me as an individual. Vi made the effort to understand what I was good at and what I needed to work on so that I was able to perform to the best of my abilities.”*

**Henry B.**, Offered a place at one of Melbourne’s four elite selective schools in 2011

*“I sat an exam for a select entry learning program in May 2011 and needed help in English. Exam Success explains things in an easy to understand way. Vi really cares about my progress and even answered my questions out of class times.”*

**Oscar X.**, Progressed through to interview stage after sitting an exam for a Selective Entry Program in 2011

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Exam Success Pty Ltd prides itself on helping students develop an understanding behind the exam questions to assist them to achieve Exam Success. Exam Success is founded by Vi, a former scholarship recipient at The University of Melbourne and former student at The MacRobertson Girls' High School who achieved an ENTER score in the top 5% of Victoria.

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