

It's vs. Its vs. Its'	<i>It's</i> means <i>it is</i> .	<u>It's</u> a beautiful day!	[= <u>It is</u> a beautiful day!]
	<i>Its</i> shows possession.	The dog wagged <u>its</u> tail.	[= The tail <u>belongs to</u> the dog.]
	<i>Its'</i> is never correct.	NEVER USE <u>ITS'</u> FOR ANY REASON.	
You're vs. Your	<i>You're</i> means <i>you are</i> .	<u>You're</u> a jerk.	[= <u>You are</u> a jerk.]
	<i>Your</i> shows possession.	<u>Your</u> fly is open.	[= The fly <u>belongs to</u> you.]
They're vs. Their vs. There	<i>They're</i> means <i>they are</i> .	<u>They're</u> going to win.	[= <u>They are</u> going to win.]
	<i>Their</i> shows possession.	I like <u>their</u> uniforms.	[= The uniforms <u>belong to</u> them.]
	<i>There</i> shows location.	Put it over <u>there</u>.	[= I'm telling you <u>where</u> to put it.]
Who's vs. Whose	<i>Who's</i> means <i>who is</i> .	the man <u>who's</u> buying my car	[= the man <u>who is</u> buying my car]
	<i>Whose</i> shows possession.	the man <u>whose</u> car I'm buying	[= the car <u>belongs to</u> the man]

III. OTHER PUNCTUATION MARKS

Semicolon (;)

A semicolon is basically the same thing as a period. They follow the same rules. Why bother with the semicolon, then? Because it puts the two clauses into *the same sentence*. Therefore, it connects the ideas more strongly than if they were separate sentences with a period.

In fact, a semicolon is exactly what it looks like—a combination of a period and a comma. It separates independent clauses as a period does, but it separates parts of a single sentence as a comma does.

Because a semicolon works just like a period, a semicolon **must** be used to separate **independent clauses**. If you're not sure whether you can put a semicolon somewhere, try replacing it with a period. A semicolon should always be **interchangeable with a period** without making any other changes to the sentence (except capitalization). If you can't replace it with a period without changing the words, you can't use a semicolon.

- ✓ **Dave has been studying more; his grades have improved as a result.**
- ✓ **Dave has been studying more. His grades have improved as a result.**
- × **While riding the bus; my father lost his wallet.**
- × **While riding the bus. My father lost his wallet.**

The semicolon can be a nice tool, and using it properly can help you improve your writing. However, for some reason, **on the SAT semicolons are wrong far more often than they are right**. So if you're not sure whether a semicolon is correct, it probably isn't.

Occasionally, semicolons can be used instead of commas to separate items in a list when those items contain commas. But this does not occur often.

- ✓ **I've met three people at the conference: Dave, who likes cats; Roger, the man from Portland, Oregon; and a third man whose name, I think, was Jesse.**

Colon (:)

A colon **strongly connects** two clauses. Use a colon when what follows is a quotation, an elaboration on, or a direct example of what precedes it.

- ✓ **Steve is a bibliophile: he spends all his time reading.**

Every semicolon must have an independent clause before and after it.

Quadratic equations

ANSWERS:

✎ What are the solutions for $x^2 - 12x = 0$?

Answer: 0 or 12

$$x(x-12) = 0$$

$$x = 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x - 12 = 0$$

$$x = 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x = 12$$

✎ What are the solutions for $x^2 - 11x + 30 = 0$?

Answer: 5 or 6

$$(x-5)(x-6) = 0$$

$$x-5 = 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x-6 = 0$$

$$x = 5 \quad \text{or} \quad x = 6$$

✎ What are the solutions for $x^2 - 7x - 8 = 0$?

Answer: -1 or 8

$$(x+1)(x-8) = 0$$

$$x+1 = 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x-8 = 0$$

$$x = -1 \quad \text{or} \quad x = 8$$

✎ What are the solutions for $x^2 - 81 = 0$?

Answer: -9 or 9

$$(x+9)(x-9) = 0$$

$$x+9 = 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x-9 = 0$$

$$x = -9 \quad \text{or} \quad x = 9$$

Or add 81 to both sides:

$$x^2 = 81 \quad x = \pm 9$$

✎ What are the solutions for $x^2 - 13x = -42$?

Answer: 6 or 7

First, add 42 to both sides to get 0 on the right:
 $x^2 - 13x + 42 = 0$ Now factor and solve.
 $(x-6)(x-7) = 0$

$$x-6 = 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x-7 = 0$$

$$x = 6 \quad \text{or} \quad x = 7$$

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4. Main Idea Questions

Often, questions will literally just be looking for the main ideas. We've already seen some examples of that in the last chapter. You of course should be figuring out the main ideas of the paragraphs and the passages *anyway*, so if a question asks about an entire paragraph or the whole passage, you can often use your main ideas as your anticipation.

Questions 7 and 8 are based on the following passage.

Line
5 Given the multitude of wastes and toxins that permeate modern life, it is a moral imperative for all of us to live environmentally friendly lives. If we are not attentive to the way we consume, we are in real danger of using up precious resources, poisoning our air and water, and putting future generations at risk.

10 But what exactly does it mean to be environmentally friendly? Is it better to use paper towels that kill trees, or electric hand dryers that use electricity (which, in most areas, means burning coal)? Is it worse to use light bulbs that draw a lot of power and must be replaced frequently, or long-lasting bulbs that contain deadly mercury?

MAIN IDEA:

7. The primary purpose of the first paragraph is to

ANTICIPATION: _____

- A) detail the damage that toxins can inflict on natural habitats.
- B) explain how best to live an environmentally friendly life.
- C) convey the significance of the impact modern life has on environmental concerns.
- D) foretell the inescapable hazards that modernity will cause for future generations.

8. The main idea of the second paragraph is

ANTICIPATION: _____

- A) daily household decisions have a negligible impact on the environment.
- B) consuming excess energy is ultimately more detrimental than creating excess waste.
- C) determining the most environmentally ethical choice can be difficult.
- D) earlier warnings about the dangers of wastefulness were exaggerated.

Main Idea Questions

7. **Answer: C.**

This question was discussed in the text of this chapter.

8. **Answer: C.**

What's the Main Idea of the second paragraph?

The whole paragraph is just a string of questions. These questions ask which of two options is environmentally better (two options that both seem bad).

Something like: **questions about what's better** would work.

Or even just the first question in line 7: **what does it mean to be environmentally friendly**.

- A) False. The first paragraph clearly states that these dangers are a part of our daily lives. The second paragraph gives examples of environmental hazards connected to these decisions.
Negligible = *insignificant*.
- B) Random. The example in lines 10-12 compares light bulbs that use excess energy with those that contain hazardous waste. But the passage only raises the question. It does not actually say which is better.
- C) **Correct.** This matches our Main Ideas nicely. It's not obvious "what it means to be environmentally friendly". There are questions about it.
- D) Random. Nothing in paragraph 2 implies that these concerns aren't important or that dangers don't really exist.