

INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1

The ISEE Reading Comprehension section tests your ability to understand short passages from a variety of different sources. If you are taking the ISEE Lower Level, you will answer 25 total questions based on 5 passages (5 questions per passage). If you are taking the ISEE Middle or Upper Levels, you will answer 36 total questions based on 6 passages (6 questions per passage). Genres may include informative passages, persuasive passages, and narrative passages. You will be asked answer questions about the author’s main idea, supporting information, argument organization, and writing style. You may also be asked to infer conclusions not explicitly stated in the passage by expanding logically on the author’s argument. However, you will never need to rely on any of your own prior knowledge about the material; all of the information needed to answer these questions will be given directly in the passage.

APPROACHING THE READING SECTION

TIME MANAGEMENT

Pace yourself carefully. You are only given points for answering the questions, not reading the passages, so don’t spend too long reading any one passage. Focus on the shorter passages first and save the longer passages for last. If you are unsure about a question, make your best guess and move on—you can always come back to the question if you have time at the end. If you are close to running out of time, see if there are any questions you can answer quickly by reading just a few lines in the passage, and make your best guess on any other questions you have left.

Read quickly, trying to understand the main points of the passage rather than the small details. Don’t waste time trying to understand every piece of information in the passage. If something doesn’t make sense to you, try to get an overall sense of what the author is saying and move on.

ANSWER QUESTIONS OUT OF ORDER

Answer questions about the main idea or the main purpose first, and then turn to questions that ask about specific details in the passage. If a question looks like it will take a long time to answer, make your best guess, circle it, and come back to it if you have time at the end of the section.

PROCESS OF ELIMINATION

Use the **Process of Elimination** to narrow down your answer choices, eliminating answers that are obviously wrong or have nothing to do with what is being asked. Then decide among the remaining answer choices which one best answers the question. Remember that you are being asked to find the best answer, not the one that immediately seems correct. Check all of the possible answer choices before making your selection.

VOCABULARY BUILDING

Use your practice reading passages to help develop your vocabulary. Circle words you don't understand, look them up, and add them to your vocabulary flashcards or journal.